A Handbook of Moral Theology: Sin and the means of grace

Anton Koch

MORAL THEOLOGY
II

A HANDBOOK
OF MORAL THEOLOGY

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A HANDBOOK OF MORAL THEOLOGY

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SIN AND THE MEANS OF GRACE

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alternately, declares that: "A sin is some deed, word, or desire against the eternal law." [7] Since all temporal laws are derived from, or contained in, the *lex aeterna,* every sin manifestly involves a violation of the will of God. St. Thomas says: "Sin is nothing else than a bad human act. Now, that an act is a human act is due to its being voluntary. . . . Again, a human act is evil through lacking conformity with its due measure: and conformity of measure in a thing depends on a rule, from which no thing can depart without becoming incommensurate. Now there are two rules of the human will. One is proximate and homogeneous, *viz.,* the human reason; the other is the first rule, *viz.,* the eternal law, which is God's reason, so to speak. Accordingly Augustine includes two things in the definition of sin; one pertaining to the substance of a human act, and which is the matter, so to speak, of sin, when he says, 'deed, word, or desire'; the other pertaining to the nature of evil, and which is, as it were, the form of sin, when he says, 'against the eternal law.'" [8]

[7] *Contra Faustum Manich.,* l. XXII, c. 27 (Migne, *P. L.,* XLII, 418): *"Peccatum est factum vel dictum vel concupitum aliquid contra aeternam legem."*

[8] *Summa Theol.,* 1a, qu. 71, art. 6: *"Peccatum nihil aliud est quam actus humanus malus. Quod autem aliquis actus sit humanus, habet ex hoc, quod est voluntarius. . . . Habet autem actus humanus quod sit malus ex eo quod caret debitâ commensuratione. Omnis autem commensuratio cuiuscunque rei attenditur per comparationem ad aliquam regulam; a quâ si divertat, incommensurata erit. Regula autem voluntatis humanae est duplex: una propinqua et homogenea, scil. ipsa humana ratio; alia vero*

The definition given by St. Augustine and adopted by St. Thomas applies alike to actual sins (*i. e.,* acts or omissions violating the moral law) and sinful habits (*habitus peccaminosi*).

2. CHARACTERISTICS.—Sin, being a wilful transgression of the divine law, has the following, partly positive and partly negative, notes or characteristics:

a) Sin does not inhere in the nature of things, nor proceed from the Divine Essence or some other independent principle, but owes its existence entirely to free-will. "By the will," says St. Augustine, "a man sins or lives a good life." [9] St. Thomas writes: "Sin consists essentially in an act of free choice, which is a function of the will and of reason." [10] And in another place: "A man's will alone is directly the cause of his sin." [11]

Being an act of a created agent, sin is not a substance but merely an accident. It is not *some-*

est prima regula, scil. lex aeterna, quae est quasi ratio Dei. Et ideo Augustinus in definitione peccati posuit duo: unum quod pertinet ad substantiam actus humani, quod est quasi materiale in peccato, quum dixit, 'dictum, vel factum, vel concupitum;' aliud autem quod pertinet ad rationem mali, quod est quasi formale in peccato, quum dixit, 'contra legem aeternam.' "—Cfr. Scheeben, *Dogmatik,* Vol. II, pp. 522 sqq.—The various definitions of sin given by the Fathers and leading Scholastics will be found in St. Bonaventure, *Comment. in Sent.,* II, dist. 35, dub. 6 (*Opera Omnia,* Quaracchi 1885, Vol. II, p. 838).

9 *Retract.,* I, c. 9, n. 4: "*Voluntas est, quâ et peccatur et recte vivitur.*" (Migne, *P. L.,* XXXII, 596).

10 *Summa Theol.,* 1a 2ae, qu. 77, art. 6: "*Peccatum essentialiter consistit in actu liberi arbitrii, quod est facultas voluntatis et rationis.*"

11 *Summa Theol.,* 1a 2ae, qu. 80, art. 1: "*Sola voluntas hominis est directe causa peccati eius.*"

thing that is not (οὐκ ὄν), but *something that ought not to exist* (μὴ ὄν). In other words, it has no substance of its own, but is a privation or corruption of goodness (*privatio boni*); not, of course, a pure privation, but merely "an act deprived of its due order." [12] "Evil," the Angelic Doctor says, ". . . is nothing else than a privation of that which a man is naturally apt to have and ought to have; . . . but a privation is not an essence; it is a negation in a substance." [13]

Aristotle regarded sin as a necessary stage on the way to goodness, or as goodness itself in so far as it has not yet proceeded from potency to act, and consequently is a mere imperfection or *minus bonum*.[14] This is a false view, for while it cannot be denied that both in the life of indi-

12 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 1, ad 2: "*Peccatum non est pura privatio, sed est actus debito ordine privatus.*"

13 *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, c. 7: "*Malum . . . nihil est aliud quam privatio eius quod quis natus est et debet habere. . . . Privatio autem non est aliqua essentia, sed est negatio in substantia.*"—Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, XI, c. 9: "*Mali nulla natura est, sed amissio boni mali nomen accepit.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLI, 325).—*Ibid.*, XII, c. 9 (*P. L.*, XLI, 355).—Idem, *Contra Epist. Manich. Fundam.*, c. 35, n. 30: "*Quis dubitet totum illud, quod dicitur malum, nihil esse aliud quam corruptionem? . . . Quodsi non invenitur in rebus malum nisi corruptio, et corruptio non est natura, nulla utique natura malum est.*" (*P. L.*, XLII, 201).—Cfr. Saint Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a, qu. 63, art. 1: "*Peccare nihil est aliud quam declinare a rectitudine actûs, quam debet habere, sive accipiatur peccatum in naturalibus sive in artificialibus sive in moralibus.*"—Idem, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 21, art. 1: "*Peccatum proprie consistit in actu, qui agitur propter finem aliquem, quum non habet debitum ordinem ad finem illum.*"—*Ibid.*, qu. 71, art. 1: "*Peccatum proprie nominat actum inordinatum, sicut actus virtutis est actus ordinatus et debitus.*"—Cfr. J. Nirschl, *Ursprung und Wesen des Bösen*, Ratisbon 1854, pp. 29 sqq.

14 Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, l. XIV, c. 4: τὸ κακὸν αὐτὸ τὸ δυνάμει ἀγαθόν.

viduals and in the history of the human race evil sometimes appears as the inciting cause of good, it is equally true, and a matter of common experience, that such cases are the exception, not the rule, and consequently prove nothing with regard to the nature of evil. If an evil act accidentally results in good, this is not imputable to man, but to God. Cfr. Gen. L, 20: "You thought evil against me, but God turned it into good, that he might exalt me . . . and save many people." [15]

It would be a mistake, however, to conceive sin as a simple negation. If it were merely the lack or absence of good, sin would be a natural and necessary result of creatural limitation, and its real author would be God Himself. Deep down in his heart every man knows that sin is not the work of God but of man, and that it involves guilt.[16]

b) God cannot be the author of sin as such.[17]

15 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, c. 96: *"Nec dubitandum est Deum facere bene etiam sinendo fieri, quaecunque fiunt male. Non enim hoc nisi iusto iudicio sinit, et profecto bonum est omne, quod iustum est. Quamvis ergo ea quae mala sunt, inquantum mala sunt, non sint bona, tamen ut non solum bona, sed etiam sint et mala, bonum est. Nam nisi esset hoc bonum, ut essent mala, nullo modo esse sinerentur ab omnipotente bono, cui procul dubio quam facile est, quod vult facere, tam facile est, quod non vult esse non sinere."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 276).—IDEM, *De Praedest. Sanctorum*, c. 16, n. 33: *"Est in malorum potestate peccare. Ut autem peccando hoc vel hoc illâ malitiâ faciant, non est in eorum potestate, sed Dei dividentis tenebras et ordinantis eas, ut hinc etiam quod faciunt contra voluntatem Dei, non impleatur nisi voluntas."* (*P. L.*, XLIV, 984).

16 Cfr. Psalm L, 5–6; Matth. XXVII, 3–5.

17 Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Ordine*, II, c. 7, n. 23: *"Malorum auctorem Deum fateberis, quo sacri-*

For, in the first place, sin is not a substance but merely a privation, and, secondly, Almighty God punishes the sinner. "God in no wise wills the evil of sin, which is the privation of right order towards the divine good," explains St. Thomas; "the evil of natural defect, or of punishment, He does will, by willing the good to which such evils are attached." [18] In other words, "God is the author of the evil which is penalty, but not of the evil which is fault." [19]

Holy Scripture frequently refers to God as the Author of holiness, and the all-holy One who is free from sin and tempteth no man.[20] It seems hard to reconcile this truth with the many texts in which God is described as actively cooperating in the sinful deeds of His creatures. Thus St. Paul says of the gentiles that, because they practiced idolatry, "God gave them up (παρέδωκεν) to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves," and "delivered them up to shameful

legio mihi detestabilius nihil occurrit." (*P. L.*, XXXII, 1005).—Idem, *Enchiridion*, c. 23, n. 8: "*Nequaquam dubitare debemus, rerum quae ad nos pertinent bonarum causam non esse nisi bonitatem Dei, malarum vero ab immutabili bono deficientem boni mutabilis voluntatem.*" (*P. L.*, XL, 244).—Cfr. K. Clemen, *Die christliche Lehre von der Sünde*, Vol. I, pp. 123 sqq.

18 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a, qu. 19, art. 9: "*Malum culpae, quod privat ordinem ad bonum divinum, Deus nullo modo vult. Sed malum naturalis defectus vel malum poenae vult, volendo aliquod bonum, cui coniungitur tale malum.*"

19 *Ibid.*, qu. 49, art. 2: "*Deus est auctor mali, quod est poena, non autem mali, quod est culpa.*"—Cfr. Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Vol. II, pp. 569 sqq.; Th. H. Simar, *Die Theologie des hl. Paulus*, Freiburg 1883, pp. 82 sq.

20 Lev. XI, 44; XIX, 2; Matth.

affections, . . . to a reprobate sense," etc.[21] In another place he declares that the heathen, "having their understanding darkened, . . . have given themselves up to lasciviousness." [22] The seeming contradiction cannot be solved by putting an arbitrary construction upon the sacred text. Being the first, universal, and immediate cause of all things and all operations, God works in every creature and has a share in every creatural act. Every ethical act performed by man has two causes—God and free-will. Though these causes coöperate closely, they are essentially distinct in their nature as well as in the relation they respectively bear to the act performed. Free-will is the efficient cause (*causa efficiens*) of every ethical act as such. But sin is never an act of God. St. Paul speaks of God as coöperating, not in the sinful acts of the gentiles, but in punishing them.[23]

It would not be correct, even so, to describe the divine coöperation in the evil deeds of men as a mere permission or toleration. God works in all His creatures at all times, and no secondary cause, whether it be spiritual or material, can operate without His concurrence. Hence He not merely permits sin, but somehow positively coöperates in its commission (*concursus divinus*). "God is

V, 48; XIX, 17; Jas. I, 13; 1 Pet. I, 16.

21 Rom. I, 24, 26, 28.

22 Eph. IV, 19; cfr. Acts VII, 42.

23 διὸ, διὰ τοῦτο, καὶ καθὼς παρέδωκεν.

the cause of the act of sin," says St. Thomas; "yet He is not the cause of sin [as such], because He does not cause the act to have a defect." [24] "God is the author of all that exists," explains St. Augustine, "but He is not the author of evil, because all things are good in so far as they exist." [25] Again: "Every nature, even that which is corrupted, is good *qua* nature, and evil [only] in so far as it is corrupt." [26] God's contribution to a sinful act is in itself good. He merely enables man to employ the faculties which He has given him for a good purpose. It is man who renders the act evil by having a wrong intention. The Scholastics express this truth as follows: *"Deus concurrit ad materiale, non ad formale peccati."* The Tridentine Council condemns the assertion that "it is not in man's power to make his ways evil, but the works that are evil God worketh as well as those that are good, not permissibly only, but properly and of Himself, in such wise that the treason of Judas is no less His own proper work than the vocation of Paul." [27]

[24] St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 79, art. 2: *"Deus est causa actus peccati; non tamen est causa peccati, quia non est causa huius, quod actus sit cum defectu."—Ibid.* (*Sed contra*): *"Actus peccati est quidam motus liberi arbitrii. Sed voluntas Dei est causa omnium motionum, ut Augustinus dicit (De Trinit., III, c. 4 et 9). Ergo voluntas Dei est causa actus peccati."*

[25] *De Divers. Quaest.*, 83, n. 21: *"Mali auctor non est [Deus], qui omnium, quae sunt, auctor est; quia inquantum sunt, intantum bona sunt."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 16).

[26] St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, c. 13: *"Omnis natura, etiam vitiosa, inquantum natura est, bona est; inquantum vitiosa est, mala est."* (*P. L.*, XL, 16, 28).

[27] *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 6: *"Si quis dixerit, non esse in potestate hominis, vias suas malas fa-*

Besides, God often employs sin as a means of punishing the sinner and thus indirectly causes good to spring from evil.[28]

Against the teaching just propounded the following objection has been raised: "Some actions are evil and sinful in their species (*secundum suam speciem*). Now, that which is the cause of a thing, is also the cause of whatever belongs to that thing in respect of its species. If, therefore, God caused the act which is sinful, He would be the cause of sin." This fallacy is tersely refuted by St. Thomas as follows: "Acts and habits do not take their species from the privation itself, wherein the nature of evil consists, but from some object to which that privation is united; and so this defect, which we say is not from God, belongs to the species of the act as a consequence, and not as a specific difference." [29] In other words, God causes the act and its species, without causing the defect that renders it evil.

Some theologians hold that God merely permits evil

cere, sed mala opera, ita ut bona, Deum operari, non permissive solum, sed etiam proprie et per se, adeo ut sit proprium eius opus non minus proditio Iudae quam vocatio Pauli, anathema sit."

28 Cfr. Gen. XLV, 7 sq.; L, 20; Wisd. XI, 17; Matth. XIII, 29 sqq. —St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 54, n. 4: *"Ne putetis gratis esse malos in hoc mundo et nihil boni de illis agere Deum. Omnis malus aut ideo vivit, ut corrigatur, aut ideo vivit, ut per illum bonus exerceatur."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVI, 630).—Idem, *Enchiridion*, c. 27: *"Melius [Deus] iudicavit de malis bene facere, quam mala nulla esse permittere."* (*P. L.*, XL, 245).

29 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 79, art. 2, ad 3: *"Videtur quod . . . aliqui actus secundum suam speciem sunt mali et peccata. . . . Sed quidquid est causa alicuius, est causa eius, quod convenit ei secundum suam speciem. Si ergo Deus esset causa actus peccati, sequeretur, quod esset causa peccati. . . . Actus et habitus non recipiunt speciem ex ipsâ privatione, in quâ consistit ratio mali, sed ex aliquo defectu, cui coniungitur talis privatio. Et sic ipse defectus, qui dicitur non esse a Deo, pertinet ad speciem actus consequenter, et non quasi differentia specifica."*—Cfr. J. Mausbach, *Die Ethik des hl. Augustinus*, Vol. II, pp. 74 sqq.

but never coöperates in its production. This view cannot be squared with the Tridentine decision quoted above, which refers to His action in the production of evil as "*permissive operari.*" [30]

c) Sin, being inspired by opposition to the will of God, who is the Supreme Lawgiver and benevolent Father of His creatures, is an act of disobedience and ingratitude.[31] As an act of disobedience it is called an offense (*offensa Dei, offensio*).

But if God is absolutely perfect and incapable of suffering, how is it possible to offend Him and provoke His anger,[32] especially since the sinner commonly lacks the *animus iniuriandi, i. e.*, the deliberate intention of offending? That this is so may be admitted; yet the (metaphorical) designation of sin as an offense against God corresponds so well with its nature and with our limited human conception of Him, that it must be accepted as substantially correct.[33]

Being an act of disobedience to the will of God and a denial of the moral order, sin is necessarily opposed to the sinner's own welfare, nay to his very nature. Instead of the beatitude for which he was created, and towards which his nature as well as the will of His Maker compel him to tend, the sinner seeks his happiness in him-

30 *V. supra*, p. 8, n. 27.

31 Deut. XXXII, 6; Is. I, 2-4; Jer. II, 32; V, 21-25.

32 Cfr. Ps. V, 5 sqq.; X, 4; LXXVII, 17.—Cfr. M. Pohlenz, *Vom Zorn Gottes*, Göttingen 1909.

33 Cfr. B. Dörholt, *Die Lehre von der Genugtuung Christi*, Paderborn 1891, pp. 269 sqq.

self and other creatures. Hence every sin springs from inordinate self-love [34] and must result in shame, discontent, unhappiness, and spiritual suicide.[35] The common sense of mankind has embodied this truth in many proverbs, *e. g.*, "Every sinner is his own executioner," "Sin is its own punishment," "It does not pay to be wicked," etc.

3. ORIGIN.—For an explanation of the origin of sin we must turn to Revelation.

a) The first sin,—the deliberate rebellion of Lucifer and his angels against the will of God [36] —was purely spiritual. As these angels were pure spirits, the decision they made was irrevocable, and their punishment will last forever. Man also sinned, but his fall was not due to malice. He was seduced by the devil, the prince or god of this world,[37] who is not yet fully subdued, but continues to work havoc in the "children of unbelief." [38]

Man's sin, therefore, differs from the sin of the fallen angels in several respects: (1) It is not purely spiritual, but partly carnal, and hence the result, not of pure malice, but of malice and infirmity combined. (2) In man sin proceeds

34 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 77, art. 4: "*Inordinatus amor sui est causa omnis peccati.*"

35 Cfr. Gen. III, 5, 10; Jer. II, 13; Tob. XII, 10; Prov. VIII, 36.

36 Cfr. Matth. XXV, 41; Luke X, 18; Apoc. XII, 7–9.

37 John XII, 31; XIV, 30; XVI, 11; 2 Cor. IV, 3 sq.—Cfr. *Conc. Lateran. IV* (a. 1215), c. 1: "*Diabolus et alii daemones a Deo quidem naturâ creati sunt boni, sed ipsi per se facti sunt mali. Homo vero diaboli suggestione peccavit.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 428).

38 Wisd. II, 24 sq.; John VIII, 44; Eph. II, 1 sq.; VI, 12; 1 John III, 8.

not merely from a momentary decision of the will, as in the case of the fallen angels, but likewise from original sin, which is a coöperating factor in every personal transgression. For this reason sin in man is not punished by death but is pardonable. True, man cannot redeem himself, but he can be redeemed.[39] Aside from the state of final impenitence, moreover, the soul of the human sinner is not utterly dead, but capable of being revived. In the majority of cases sin, to employ an Augustinian phrase, is "not nature, but against nature,"[40] and even the most grievous offender still remains an object of compassion in the eyes of God, who, while He hates sin, desires that the sinner be converted and live.[41]

It is a characteristic fact of no small importance in judging the malice of sin that man was named for the lower or mortal side of his nature. Holy Scripture says: "As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame."[42]

39 Matth. I, 21; Acts XVII, 22–31; Rom. V, 12; Gal. I, 4; cfr. Jas. I, 14.

40 St. Augustine, *Contra Epist. Manich. Fundam.*, c. 35, n. 39: "*Videre iam facile est, [malum] non esse naturam, sed contra naturam.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLII, 201).

41 Cfr. Ez. XVIII, 32; XXXI, 11; Wisd. XI, 24 sq.; Matth. V, 45; 2 Pet. III, 9.

42 Ps. CII, 13 sq.—Cfr. Gen. V, 2; Ps. LXXVII, 38 sq.; Is. LXIV, 8 sq.—St. Ambrose, *De Noë et Arca*, c. 4, n. 9: "*Homo positus in terrae regione carnem portans sine peccato esse non potest, terra enim velut quidam tentationum locus est caroque corruptelae illecebra.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XIV, 366).—Cfr. the major antiphon for Dec. 22 in the Roman Breviary: "*O rex gentium et desi-*

Theologians are at variance with regard to the nature of the sin committed by the fallen angels and that of our first parents.[43] The crime of the angels probably was pride. Some rationalists hold that Adam and Eve died because the fruit of the tree of which they ate was poisonous. This theory is as untenable as that the first human sin was an act of fornication.[44]

The question why God did not prevent the sin of our first parents, is answered by St. Augustine as follows: "God did not lack the power of creating man so that he could not sin, but chose to make him so that he could sin if he wished, or abstain from sin if he preferred, by forbidding this and prescribing that; thus it was first a merit not to sin, and later a just reward not to be able to sin." [45]

b) To understand the nature and gravity of sin, we must remember that the disobedience of our first parents was a very grievous, nay, in some respects the most grievous offense a human being could commit. And this for two reasons:

α) Adam and Eve sinned in spite of the extraordinary natural and supernatural privileges which they enjoyed;

β) Their disobedience was an act of flagrant

deratus earum lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum: veni et salva hominem, quem de limo formasti."

43 Cfr. Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Vol. II, pp. 578 sqq., 593 sqq.; Pesch, *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. III, 3rd ed., pp. 220 sqq.; A. Schöpfer, *Geschichte des Alten Testamentes*, pp. 47 sqq.; Pohle-Preuss, *God the Author of Nature*, p. 342.

44 Cfr. 2 Cor. XI, 3.

45 *De Continentia*, c. VI, n. 16: *"Non potestas Deo defuit, talem facere hominem, qui peccare non posset, sed maluit eum talem facere, cui adiaceret peccare, si vellet, non peccare, si nollet, hoc prohibens, illud praecipiens, ut prius illi [Adae] esset bonum meritum non peccare, et postea iustum praemium non posse peccare."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 359).

ingratitude and formal contempt, committed with the full knowledge that it would injure not only themselves but all their descendants.[46]

Moreover, Christ became man and suffered and died because of sin.[47]

Again, men continue to sin, though their intellect is enlightened by revelation and their will strengthened by grace, and in spite of the incomprehensible love shown in the atonement.[48]

Every serious transgression of the divine law, *i. e.*, every actual mortal sin, deserves temporal and eternal death and delivers the sinner into the bondage of Satan.[49] But not every transgression of the law is mortally sinful. There are slight offenses, called *"levia et quotidiana, quae etiam venialia dicuntur peccata"* by the Tridentine Council, and these do not destroy sanctifying grace.[50]

It is to the important distinction between mortal and venial sin that we must now turn our attention.

Readings.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 1a 2ae, qu. 71–89. —Suarez, *Tractatus de Vitiis et Peccatis,* disp. 1–6 (*Opera Omnia,* Vol. IV, pp. 515 sqq.).—J. Müller, *Die christliche Lehre von der*

46 Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei,* XXIV, c. 15, n. 1; *Enchiridion,* c. 27, 45, 48; *De Corrept. et Gratia,* c. 12, n. 35.—St. Bonaventure, *Comment. in Sent.,* II, dist. 21, art. 3, qu. 1 and 2.

47 Cfr. Matth. I, 21; Mark X, 45; John III, 16 sq.; Rom. V, 8 sqq.; 2 Cor. V, 15; Eph. I, 7.

48 John III, 16; XV, 13; Eph. I, 3–14; III, 16–19; 1 John III, 16; IV, 9.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* 2a 2ae, qu. 14, art. 2.

49 Gen. II, 17; Rom. VI, 23; Jas. I, 15.

50 *Conc. Trident.,* Sess. VI, c. 11. Cfr. *Cat. Rom.,* P. II, c. 6, qu. 14.

Sünde, 6th ed., 2 vols., Stuttgart 1877-78.—M. Merkle, *Das Wesen des Bösen,* Dillingen 1847.—F. Teipel, *De Peccati Natura,* Coesfeld 1847, pp. 10 sqq.—J. Nirschl, *Ursprung und Wesen des Bösen,* Ratisbon 1854, pp. 23 sqq.—K. Clemen, *Die christliche Lehre von der Sünde,* Vol. I, Göttingen 1897, pp. 20 sqq.—C. Manzoni, *De Natura Peccati,* S. Angeli Laud., 1890.—J. B. Pighi, *Commentarius de Iudicio Sacramentali,* 3rd ed., Verona 1904, pp. 97 sqq.—E. Janvier, *Exposition de la Morale Catholique,* Vol. V, Paris 1907.—M. J. Scheeben, *Dogmatik,* Freiburg 1873, Vol. II, pp. 515 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae,* Vol. IX, 2nd ed., pp. 295 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *God the Author of Nature and the Supernatural,* 2nd ed., St. Louis 1916, pp. 232 sqq.—A. C. O'Neil, O.P., art. "Sin," in the *Cath. Encyclopedia,* Vol. XIV, pp. 4 sqq.—Card. Manning, *Sin and Its Consequences,* Am. reprint, New York 1904.—A. B. Sharpe, *Evil, Its Nature and Cause,* London 1906.—Card. Billot, *De Natura et Ratione Peccati Personalis,* Rome 1900.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. I, pp. 133 sqq.—Wilhelm-Scannell, *A Manual of Catholic Theology,* Vol. II, 2nd ed., London 1901, pp. 3 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. I, pp. 320 sqq., 11th ed., Innsbruck 1914.—Aug. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theologia Moralis,* 11th ed., Freiburg 1910, Vol. I, pp. 186 sqq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theologiae Moralis et Pastoralis,* Vol. II, Paris 1905, pp. 239 sqq.—Al. Sabetti, S.J. (ed. T. Barrett, S.J.), *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* 22nd ed., New York 1915, pp. 111 sqq.

SECTION 2

MORTAL AND VENIAL SINS

I. IMPORTANCE OF THE DISTINCTION.—The distinction between mortal and venial sins is of great practical importance, especially for the tribunal of Penance, where the sinner is obliged to state the kind and number of his mortal transgressions, which constitute *materia necessaria* for the validity of the Sacrament. Venial sins, on the other hand, are *materia libera, i. e.*, they need not be confessed, though to confess them is useful and advisable.[1]

The teaching of the Church with regard to the distinction between mortal and venial sins is clear and definite. Nevertheless, the scientific demonstration of this doctrine is one of the most difficult problems of Moral Theology and has given rise to many heated controversies (*e. g.*, Kleutgen vs. Hirscher; Frick vs. Linsenmann; Pesch vs. Schell, etc.)

II. PROOF FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE, TRADITION, AND REASON.—The distinction between mortal and venial sins has a solid basis in Sacred Scripture and ecclesiastical Tradition.

1 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, cap. 5 and can. 7; Sess. VI, cap. 11.

1. Sacred Scripture distinguishes between sins of greater or less gravity in such passages as: "Whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire;" [2] in the parables of the moat and the beam,[3] of the king who took account of his servants,[4] in the similitude of the blind guides who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel,[5] and so forth. The Bible moreover expressly mentions sins that are "worthy of death," [6] the doers of which "shall not possess the kingdom of God;" [7] sins "that beget death," [8] and others that are regularly committed by all men, even the just.[9] Comparing the texts one cannot but see that there is a difference, not only of quantity or degree, but likewise of quality or essence, between different sins (*differentia in ipsa ratione peccati*). Mortal sin robs man of sanctifying grace, destroys the supernatural life of the soul, and entails eternal damnation; whereas venial sin merely weakens grace and diminishes that love which is poured out in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

We have purposely refrained from citing in support

2 Matth. V, 22. Cfr. Matth. X, 15; XI, 22; XVI, 10; John XIX, 11.

3 Matth. VII, 3 sqq.

4 Matth. XVIII, 23 sqq.

5 Matth. XXIII, 24.

6 Rom. I, 32; cfr. Ex. XXXII, 30 sq.; 1 John V, 16.

7 1 Cor. VI, 9 sq.; Gal. V, 19 sqq.

8 Jas. I, 13 sqq.

9 Jas. III, 2; 1 John I, 8.

of our thesis the oft-quoted text, "A just man shall fall seven times and shall rise again;" for, as St. Augustine pointed out many centuries ago, there is question here not of sins but of misfortunes.[10]

In 1 John V, 16 "sin unto death" is probably not ordinary mortal sin but that which is technically known as the sin against the Holy Ghost.[11]

The scriptural *locus classicus* for our thesis is 1 Cor. III, 8 sqq., in which the difference between mortal and venial sin is developed very graphically and with a deep insight into human nature. This text was made much of by the Scholastics.[12]

2. Ecclesiastical Tradition furnishes a long and uninterrupted series of testimonies in support of the distinction with which we are dealing.

The ancient penitential discipline distinguished between unpardonable and pardonable sins,[13] and among the latter classed some as more grievous than others.

St. Augustine draws a sharp line between "*magna crimina*" and unavoidable "*quotidiana peccata*" which, he says, are wiped out by the Lord's Prayer.[14]

10 Prov. XXIV, 16.—Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, XI, c. 31: "*Septies cadit iustus et resurget, id est, quotiescunque ceciderit, non peribit. Quod non de iniquitatibus, sed de tribulationibus ad humilitatem perducentibus intellegi voluit.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLI, 345). Cfr. *Enarr. in Ps.*, 118, s. 31, n. 4 (*P. L.*, XXXVII, 1529).—J. V. Bainvel, *Les Contresens Bibliques des Prédicateurs*, 2nd ed., Paris 1906, pp. 102 sq.

11 Cfr. A. Zahn, *De Notione Peccati*, Halle 1872, pp. 13, 28, 51.

12 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 2; Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Vol. II, p. 530.

13 Matth. XII, 31 sq.; John XX, 22 sq.

14 St. Augustine, *Contra Iul.*, II, c. 10, n. 33: "*In hoc bello* [*cum*

The Catholic Church has constantly insisted on this important distinction and defended it against heretics.[15]

3. Everyday experience as well as the common sense of mankind and enlightened reason confirm the distinction between mortal and venial sins.

concupiscentia] *laborantes, quamdiu tentatio est vita humana super terram, non ideo sine peccato non sumus, quia hoc, quod eo modo peccatum dicitur, operatur in membris repugnans legi mentis, etiam non sibi ad illicita consentientibus nobis, . . . sed in quibus ab illo rebellante, etsi non letaliter, sed venialiter tamen vincimur, in his contrahimus unde quotidie dicamus: Dimitte nobis debita nostra."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 696).—*Enchir.*, c. 71: *"De quotidianis brevibus levibusque peccatis, sine quibus haec vita non ducitur, quotidiana fidelium oratio satisfit. . . . Delet omnino haec oratio minima et quotidiana peccata."* (*P. L.*, XL, 265).—*Tr. in Ioann.*, 26, n. 11: *"Peccata etsi sunt quotidiana, vel non sint mortifera."* (*P. L.*, XXXV, 1611).—*De Symb.*, c. 7, n. 15: *"Non vobis dico, quia sine peccato hic vivetis, sed sunt venialia, sine quibus vita ista non est. Propter omnia peccata baptismus inventus est; propter levia, sine quibus esse non possumus, oratio inventa. Quid habet oratio? . . . Semel abluimur baptismate, quotidie abluimur oratione. Sed nolite illa committere, pro quibus necesse est, ut a Christi corpore separemini, quod absit a vobis. Illi enim, quod videtis agere poenitentiam, scelera commiserunt, aut adulteria aut aliqua facta immania: inde agunt poenitentiam. Nam si levia peccata ipsorum essent, ad haec quotidiana oratio delenda sufficeret."* (*P. L.*, XL, 636).—*Serm.*, 58, c. 7, n. 8: *"Sine debitis in hac terra vivere non potestis. Sed alia sunt illa magna crimina, quae vobis bonum est in baptismo dimitti et a quibus semper alieni esse debetis, alia quotidiana peccata, sine quibus hic homo vivere non potest, propter quae necessaria est quotidiana oratio."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 397).—With regard to venial or daily sins, St. Augustine calls the Lord's Prayer *"quotidiana nostra mundatio"* (*De Nupt. et Coniug.*, I, c. 33, n. 38), *"quotidiana mundatio sanctae orationis"* (*Serm.*, 56, c. 8, n. 12), and *"quasi quotidianus baptismus noster"* (*Serm.*, 213, c. 8).—On the Patristic literature regarding this question see Gerigk, *Wesen und Voraussetzungen der Todsünde*, Breslau 1903, pp. 17 sqq.

15 Cfr. *Conc. Milev. II*, can. 6–8: *"Sanctos in oratione dominica non tantum humiliter, sed etiam veraciter dicere: Dimitte nobis debita nostra."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 106 sqq.).—Among the condemned propositions of Baius is the following (n. 20): *"Nullum est peccatum ex natura sua veniale, sed omne peccatum meretur poenam aeternam."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1020).—Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 11; c. 15; can. 23 and 27; Sess. VII, *De Bapt.*, can. 10.—On Luther's teaching that all sins are by nature mortal, see H. Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 501 sqq.

As there is a *state* of spiritual death and moral infirmity, so there are external and internal *acts* that produce death and infirmity; and as there is a moral order which can be either grievously or slightly violated, so there are grievous and slight offenses against that order.[16] "Could anything be more absurd or foolish," asks St. Augustine, "than to consider one who has indulged in immoderate hilarity guilty of as great a sin as the wretch who has brought ruin upon his native land?" [17] "If two acts are equal because they are both offenses," he continues, "then mice and elephants are equal because they are both animals, and flies and eagles are equal because they can fly through the air." [18]

"Not only Scripture, but mankind in general," says a recent moralist, "recognize the fact that there are sins which by their nature do not involve a real lapse from morality, and which do not render the agent bad and worthless, but are committed even by just and pious men.

16 Cfr. Prov. VI, 30 sqq.—St. Jerome, *Adv. Iovin.*, II, c. 30: "*Sunt peccata levia, sunt gravia. Aliud est decem millia talenta debere, aliud quadrantem. Et de otioso quidem verbo et adulterio rei tenebimur, sed non est idem suffundi et torqueri, erubescere et longo tempore cruciari.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXIII, 327).

17 St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 104 (*al.* 254), c. 4, n. 13: "*Quid absurdius, quid insanius dici potest, quam ut ille, qui aliquando immoderatius riserit et ille, qui patriam truculentius incenderit, peccasse iudicentur aequaliter?*"

18 *Ibid.*, n. 14: "*Aut si propterea sunt paria, quia utraque delicta sunt, mures et elephanti pares erunt, quia utraque sunt animalia, muscae et aquilae, quia utraque volatilia.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIII, 394).—Cfr. Horace's Satires, I, 3, 96 sqq.:

"Quis paria esse fere placuit peccata, laborant,
Quum ventum ad verum est: sensus moresque repugnant
Atque ipsa utilitas, iusti prope mater et aequi."

. . . That there is an essential difference between an offense against courtesy and battery and assault for the purpose of robbery, between a falsehood told in jest and a slander affecting a man's honor, every reasonable person perceives." [19]

The truth expressed by St. James that "in many things we all offend," [20] was perceived long before the Apostle's day by Thucydides [21] and others.

4. Speculative Argument.—To demonstrate the distinction between mortal and venial sin speculatively was first attempted by the Schoolmen, especially by SS. Thomas [22] and Bonaventure,[23]

19 J. Mausbach, *Die kath. Moral*, 2nd ed., p. 110; English translation by Buchanan, pp. 259 sq. We have modified the English version somewhat in order to render the sense of the original more accurately.

20 Jas. III, 2: "Πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες—*In multis enim offendimus omnes.*"

21 Hist., III, 45: πεφύκασιν ἅπαντες καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ ἁμαρτάνειν.—Cfr. Seneca, *De Clement.*, I, 6: "*Peccamus omnes, alii gravia, alii leviora.*"

22 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 5: "*Differentia peccati venialis et mortalis consequitur diversitatem inordinationis, quae complet rationem peccati. Duplex enim est inordinatio: una per subtractionem principii ordinis; alia, qua etiam salvato principio ordinis, fit inordinatio circa ea, quae sunt post principium; sicut in corpore animalis quandoque quidem inordinatio complexionis procedit usque ad destructionem principii vitalis, et haec est mors; quandoque vero salvo principio vitae fit deordinatio quaedam in humoribus, et tunc est aegritudo. Principium autem totius ordinis in moralibus est finis ultimus, qui ita se habet in operativis, sicut principium indemonstrabile in speculativis. Unde quando anima deordinatur per peccatum usque ad aversionem ab ultimo fine, scilicet Deo, cui unitur per caritatem, tunc est peccatum mortale; quando vero fit deordinatio citra aversionem a Deo, tunc est peccatum veniale. Sicut enim in corporibus deordinatio mortis, quae est per remotionem principii vitae, est irreparabilis secundum naturam, inordinatio autem aegritudinis reparari potest propter id, quod salvatur principium vitae, similiter est in his, quae pertinent ad animam.*"

23 St. Bonaventure, *Brevil.*, P. V, c. 8: "*Quum peccatum dicat recessum voluntatis a primo principio, inquantum ipsa voluntas nata est agi ab ipso et secundum ipsum et propter ipsum, omne peccatum est inordinatio mentis sive voluntatis, circa quam nata sunt esse virtus et vitium. Peccatum igitur actuale est actualis inordinatio voluntatis. In-*

who emphasize the fact that sin is essentially a turning away from God, due to a wrong tendency of the will.

a) "When," says St. Thomas (*l. c.*), "the soul is so disordered by sin as to turn away from its last end, God, to whom it is united by charity, there is mortal sin; but when the disorder stops short of turning away from God, the sin is venial. For as in animal bodies the disorder of death, which results from the destruction of the principle of life, is irreparable in nature, whereas the disorder of sickness can be repaired, because the vital principle is preserved, so it is in matters concerning the soul. For in speculative matters he who errs in first principles is beyond the reach of persuasion, whereas one who errs but retains the first principles, may be brought back to the truth by the aid of those same principles. And so in matters of conduct, he who by sinning turns away from his last end, suffers a fall that is, so far as the nature of the sin goes, beyond repair, and exposes himself to eternal punishment. But he whose sin stops short of turning away from God, is under a disorder that by the very nature of the sin admits of repair; and therefore he is said to sin venially, because he does not sin so as to deserve never-ending punishment."

ordinatio autem ista aut est tanta, quod ordinem iustitiae exterminat, et hoc modo dicitur peccatum mortale, quia natum est auferre vitam separando ipsam a Deo, per quem vivificatur anima iusta. Aut est tam

Hence the customary definition: "A mortal sin is a turning away (*aversio*) from God and a turning to (*conversio*) creatures with a change of object." When the (final) object remains unchanged, there is only venial sin.[24]

Mortal sin, therefore, is a complete turning from God to the creature, whereby the creature becomes man's last end and the object of his affection. Such an act necessarily destroys the proper relation between God and man, and consequently robs the soul of supernatural life. Man is ordained towards his last end by charity, and whatever runs counter to charity (conceived either as the love of God or the love of one's fellow-men for God's sake) is mortally sinful. All such offenses are mortal sins according to their species (*peccata mortalia ex suo genere*). When the will is directed towards an object that is not contrary to charity, though it contain within itself some disorder (*inordinatio quaedam*), the sin committed is venial according to its species (*peccatum veniale ex suo genere*).

Since, however, human acts receive their specification not only from their objects, but likewise from the end or purpose of the agent, a sin

modica, quod ordinem illum non perimit, sed tantum in aliquo perturbat, et tunc dicitur veniale peccatum, quia de ipso adipisci possumus cito veniam, pro eo, quod gratia non tollitur per ipsum nec inimicitiam divinam incurrit homo."

24 *"Peccatum mortale est aversio a Deo et conversio ad creaturas cum mutatione centri; ubi vero centrum non mutatur, adest peccatum veniale."* (St. Thomas, *l. c.*)

which is by nature venial, so far as its object is concerned, may become mortal in respect of the person who commits it, either because he inordinately seeks his last end in that object, or because he directs the object towards an end which is by nature mortally sinful;—as when one employs a useless word for the commission of a grievous crime. Similarly, a sin which is by nature mortal may become subjectively venial if the act remains incomplete, because there is no full advertence and consent;—as when one is tempted against the faith.

To be mortal, therefore, a sin need not be committed "with uplifted hand against God," as Schell was accused of having taught, *i. e.*, it need not be inspired by hatred and malice or involve formal rebellion against the Almighty. Nor need it be an act of obstinate and impenitent opposition to divine truth and grace. The Church would not have drawn up a long list of mortal sins [25] if she believed that there is but one mortal sin, namely, rebellion or obstinate resistance to the will of God.[26]

25 Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 15; *Prop. damnat. ab Alexandro VII.*, n. 23; *sub Innocent. XI.*, 43, 44, 47, 49, 51 sq. (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1123, 1193 sq., 1197, 1201 sq.)

26 Cfr. F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, 6th ed., Vol. I, p. 219.—It is but just to add that Dr. Schell protested against the construction put upon his teaching by his opponents. "I have never denied," he says, "that every wilful transgression of the divine law in an important matter is a mortal sin. On the contrary, I accept this definition: only it falls short of determining what is important or unimportant in each case. . . . Were I asked to define the nature of mortal sin, I should say it was a voluntary or wilful transgression of a divine law in an important matter." (H. Schell, *Kleinere Schriften*, edited by K. Hennemann, Paderborn 1908, pp. 580, 587.)

b) The fact that every sin implies a disturbance of the moral order does not suffice to establish an essential distinction between mortal and venial sins. For this distinction is not (or, at least, not entirely) based on the objective consequences of sin (*materia gravis et levis*), *i. e.*, the greater or less degree in which the moral order is disturbed, but primarily on the subjective tendency of the will. "The external object," says a modern theologian, "is merely the proximate aim and motive. The ultimate cause of sin is the ego, the gratification of self-love, that inordinate seeking of one's own interest which is directly opposed to the love of God. This is true of all sins, even of those whose object lies outside the sinner's own person (infidelity, despair, presumption)." [27]

Hence, broadly speaking, it may be said that whatever is done out of malice is mortally sinful, whereas that which has infirmity for its motive is merely a venial sin, though, strictly speaking, there are sins of malice that are venial and sins of infirmity that are mortal. No man is able to fathom the secret motives of his fellow-men, and consequently God alone can tell with absolute certainty how much malice has gone into any sin.[28]

27 H. Gerigk, *Wesen und Voraussetzungen der Todsünde*, p. 116. —Cfr. Cicero, *Parad.*, III, 1: "*Parva, inquis, res est; at magna culpa. Nec enim peccata rerum eventu, sed vitiis hominum metienda sunt.*"

28 Cfr. Jer. XVII, 10; 1 Cor. IV, 4; 2 Thess. II, 7; Deut. XVII, 8.

St. Augustine says: "Which sins are venial and which are mortal can be ascertained only from Sacred Scripture, not from human wisdom." [29] And St. Thomas: "It is perilous to decide as to the grievous character of a sin unless we have a positive teaching to go by." [30] St. Raymond of Pennafort, whom the Church honors as "the eminent minister of the Sacrament of Penance," advises confessors to go slow in deciding any sin to be grievous, lest they discourage their penitents.[31]

A conscientious Catholic will strive to avoid all sins, venial as well as mortal.[32]

29 *Enchiridion*, c. 78: *"Quae sint levia, quae gravia peccata, non humano, sed divino sunt pensanda iudicio."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 269).—Cfr. *ibid.*, c. 79: *"Sunt quaedam, quae levissima putarentur, nisi in Scripturis demonstrarentur opinione gravia."* (*P. L.*, XL, 270).—Idem, *De Civ. Dei*, XXI, c. 27, n. 5: *"Quae sint ipsa peccata, quae ita impediunt perventionem ad regnum Dei, ut tamen sanctorum meritis impetrent indulgentiam, difficillimum est invenire, periculosissimum definire. Ego certe usque ad hoc tempus, quum inde satagerem, ad eorum indaginem pervenire non potui."* (*P. L.*, XLI, 750).—The reason why God left this question unsolved, St. Augustine finds in the salutary admonition to avoid all sins: *"Et fortassis propterea latent, ne studium proficiendi ad omnia peccata cavenda pigrescat. . . . Nunc vero dum venialis iniquitas, etiamsi perseveret, ignoratur modus, profecto et studium in meliora proficiendi orationi instando vigilantius adhibetur."* (*Ibid.*)

30 *Quodlibet.*, IX, art. 15: *"Omnis quaestio, in qua de peccato mortali quaeritur, nisi expressa veritas habeatur, periculose determinatur."*—Cfr. J. Gerson, *De Vita Spirit.*, lect. 4: *"Doctores theologi non debent esse faciles ad asserendum, aliqua peccata esse mortalia, ubi non sunt certissimi de re, nam per huiusmodi assertiones rigidas in rebus universis nequaquam eriguntur homines a luto peccatorum, sed in illud profundius, quia desperatius, demerguntur."*

31 *"Unum consulo, quod non sis nimis pronus iudicare mortalia peccata, ubi tibi non constat per certam scripturam, . . . alias possent induci homines in desperationem."* (L. 3, tit. de Poenit. et Rem., § 21.)—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Homo Apost.*, tr. 16, n. 118; J. E. Pruner, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., p. 189.

32 Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Bapt.*, II, c. 6, n. 9: *"Non afferamus*

Mortal sin, therefore, is a wilful transgression of the law of God in a matter which one knows or believes to be important. It robs man of sanctifying grace, deprives him of the friendship of God, and renders him deserving of eternal damnation.

Venial sin, on the other hand, is either a violation of an important law without full advertence or consent, or a transgression of a law of slight importance.[88] Venial sin does not destroy sanctifying grace and is more easily pardoned than mortal sin because it does not involve formal contempt (*contemptus*) but merely neglect of God (*neglectio Dei*).

III. If there were no distinction between mortal and venial sin, then either all sins would be mortal or all would be venial. The former proposition would entail Rigorism, the latter Laxism.

It has been objected that the Catholic teaching on this subject is derogatory to virtue and breeds lax opinions and carelessness. This accusation is unfounded. The Church expressly teaches that venial sin is incomparably worse than any temporal injury or evil, and can be expiated only

stateras dolosas, ubi appendamus, quod volumus et quomodo volumus, pro arbitrio nostro dicentes: hoc grave, hoc leve est, sed afferamus divinam stateram de scripturis sanctis tamquam de thesauris dominicis, et in illa quid sit gravius appendamus, immo non appendamus, sed a Domino appensa recognoscamus." (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIII, 132).

88 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. V, n. 51: *"Mortale est, quod ob sui gravitatem gratiam et amicitiam cum Deo solvit poenamque aeternam meretur. Dicitur mortale, quia spiritualis vitae principium, gratiam scil. habitualem, tollit et mortem animae affert. Veniale est, quod ob suam levitatem gratiam et amicitiam non tollit, etsi fervorem caritatis minuat et temporalem poenam mereatur. Dicitur veniale, quia salvo vitae spiritualis principio, scil. gratia, languorem animae facile curabilem infert veniamque facile consequitur."* (Ed. Gaudé, II, 747).

by sincere contrition and penitence, through the merits of Jesus Christ. She exhorts her children to avoid all venial sins by means of prayer, self-discipline, and the grace of God, because no man is allowed to commit even the slightest offense against the majesty and justice of God.[34]

"No confessor," says Gury, "does his full duty unless he tries to wean his penitents from frequent venial sins, especially such as involve full advertence, since a man who does not strive to avoid venial sins easily falls into mortal sins." [35]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 5; qu. 88-89.—IDEM, *De Malo*, qu. 7, art. 1-2.—IDEM, *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, c. 143-144.—Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Vol. II, pp. 528 sqq.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 156 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Theologische Zeitfragen*, II, Freiburg 1901, pp. 47 sqq., 83 sqq.—J. Stufler, S.J., *Die Heiligkeit Gottes und der ewige Tod*, Innsbruck 1903.—IDEM, *Die Theorien der freiwilligen Verstocktheit*, Innsbruck 1905.—H. Gerigk, *Wesen und Voraussetzungen der Todsünde*, Breslau 1903.—Ph. Kneib, *Die "Jenseitsmoral,"* pp. 99 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 136 sqq.—Wilhelm-Scannell, *A Manual of Catholic Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 6 sqq.—J. Mausbach, *Catholic Moral Teaching and Its Antagonists*, New York 1914, pp. 258 sqq.

34 Rom. III, 8.

35 J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 155: *"Confessarius non satisfacit muneri suo, si non curet, ut poenitentem removeat a frequentia peccatorum venialium, maxime cum plena advertentia commissorum, quum poenitens, qui non satagit ut venialia vitet, cito plerumque in mortalia labatur."*

SECTION 3

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF MORTAL AND VENIAL SIN

1. THE LEADING CRITERIA.—As mortal sins are necessary matter for confession (*materia necessaria*), the penitent who enters the sacred tribunal must be able to distinguish them with comparative certainty from venial sins. For this purpose Catholic moralists have established the following criteria:

a) KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRECEPT TRANSGRESSED.—If the precept is of great importance for the moral and social order (*materia gravis*), and its transgression is likely to entail serious consequences, the sin is grievous (*peccatum grave*). If, on the other hand, the precept is unimportant (*materia parva*), and the matter divisible, the sin is light.

Note, however, (1) that this objective distinction between serious and light sin is not identical with the distinction between mortal and venial sin, for subjectively or individually a grievous sin may be venial and a venial sin mortal, whereas a grievous sin *per se* can never be light nor a mortal

sin venial. (2) Some precepts and some sins, *e. g.*, simony, blasphemy, murder, fornication, violation of the seal of confession, are essentially indivisible and therefore do not admit of *parvitas materiae*. (3) The decision regarding the cessation of *parvitas materiae* or the beginning of a grievous sin is always more or less arbitrary. (4) When a sin is materially grievous, the presumption is that it is a mortal sin, and *vice versa*.

b) THE DEGREE OF ADVERTENCE REQUIRED FOR A MORTAL SIN.—No one who is unconscious can sin, and one who is half asleep, or partly intoxicated, or feeble-minded, cannot sufficiently appreciate the malice of mortal sin to be guilty of it.[1]

However, to be guilty of mortal sin, a man need not reflect explicitly on the malice of the contemplated act or be fully aware of the importance of the law transgressed. It is sufficient for him to know that the act is sinful. Culpable ignorance, therefore, when it results in the commission of a grievous sin, does not excuse from guilt. Still less is it necessary to commit the sinful act with the full consciousness of offending God. Some writers have construed a distinction between philosophical and theological sin. They define the former as an act contrary to rea-

1 Cfr. Matth. XXV, 26; Jas. IV, 17; cfr. Gen. XIX, 33–35; XX, 4–6.

son and the natural law, but involving no conscious violation of a divine precept, and hold that it may be grievous, but never mortal. This theory has been formally condemned by the Church.[2]

c) THE FREE CONSENT OF THE WILL.—To make an act mortally sinful, the will must give its full and free consent. This consent need not, however, involve the actual and direct intention of transgressing the moral law. All that is required is that it be full and free.[3]

Mortal sin, as we have seen, is a complete turning away from God to the creature. No act is mortally sinful unless the agent clearly perceives its true character and gives full consent. By committing a mortal sin man renders himself guilty of eternal damnation. Now it would be contrary to the goodness and mercy of God to condemn a man to eternal punishment on account of a slight transgression or for an act which was not entirely free or wilful.[4]

2 *Prop. Damnat. ab Alexandro VIII.* (Aug. 24, 1690), n. 2 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1290).

3 Cfr. Gury, *Compendium Theol. Moralis*, Vol. I, n. 150: "*Ad peccatum mortale tria necessario requiruntur, scil.* (1) *materia gravis in se vel ob circumstantias,* (2) *advertentia plena ad malitiam actus,* (3) *consensus plenus voluntatis in praevaricationem.*"—*Ibid.*, n. 153: "*Ad peccatum veniale requiruntur et sufficiunt aliqua advertentia quantumvis levis ad malitiam et aliquis consensus quantumvis imperfectus voluntatis: requiruntur quidem, quia illis sublatis nulla mali cognitio et volitio et proinde nullum peccatum esse potest; sufficiunt vero, quia illis positis mali cognitio et volitio, quae ad peccatum constituendum necessariae sunt, aliquâ ratione habentur.*"

4 *Op. cit.*, n. 150: "*Requiritur plena advertentia plenusque consensus, quia, quum per peccatum mortale homo totaliter recedat a Deo, ut creaturis omnino adhaereat, id fieri non potest nisi peccator deliberate obiectum peccati Deo praeferat et absolute velit in eo finem suum ultimum constituere. Insuper a boni-*

Some sins are mortal by their very nature or species (*peccata mortalia ex genere suo*). They are those whose object is important in itself, regardless of conditions or circumstances, *e. g.*, the theft of a large sum of money. Others (*peccata mortalia per accidens*) are rendered mortal by the attending circumstances, *e. g.*, grave scandal.

Those sins which are mortal by their nature or species are subdivided into *peccata mortalia ex toto genere suo* and *peccata mortalia ex genere suo non toto*. Sins of the former class embody some grievous disorder, such as unbelief, despair, etc. Those of the latter class have an object that, though binding under pain of grievous sin, admits of degrees because of the smallness of the matter involved (*parvitas materiae*), *e. g.*, theft, slander.

There is an analogous distinction between venial sins *ex genere suo* and *per accidens*. The former involve an unimportant object, whereas the latter have an important object, but are rendered venial by circumstances.[5]

2. Practical Hints.—a) A venial sin can become mortal, (1) by the action of an erroneous conscience that wrongly judges a venial sin to be mortal; (2) through a gravely sinful intention (*finis pravus*), as when a lie is told in order to enable one to commit adultery; (3) on account of

tate divina prorsus alienum est, hominem aeternae damnationi addicere sive per transgressionem levem sive propter actum non perfecte liberum et voluntarium."

[5] *Ibid.*: *"Peccata mortalia talia sunt:* (1) *Ex toto genere suo, quando eorum obiectum seu materia, quaecunque ea demum sit, gravem continet deordinationem, ut in luxuria, blasphemia, periurio, haeresi, etc.;* (2) *ex genere suo non toto seu simpliciter ex genere suo, quando eorum materia in eadem specie manens plerumque gravis est, quamvis etiam levis esse possit, ut sunt peccata contra iustitiam;* (3) *per accidens, i. e. quando mortalia sunt non ex obiecto suo, sed ex aliqua circumstantia, v. g. ex conscientia erronea, etc."*—Cfr. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 4th ed., pp. 224–230.

the proximate danger of mortal sin; (4) because of formal contempt of the law or the lawgiver, and (5) by reason of grave scandal entailed.

In a similar way, an objectively mortal sin may become subjectively venial, (1) on account of the smallness of the matter involved (*parvitas materiæ*); (2) through imperfect advertence or consent to an act in itself gravely sinful (excusable ignorance, extreme haste, weakness); (3) because of failure to consummate an intended sinful action, though it would have been easy to do so.

b) When positive doubt exists as to whether an act was mortally sinful or not, this doubt may be resolved in favor of the person concerned if he was so disposed that he would not have committed a mortal sin even though it was easy for him to do so, but would have preferred to die rather than grievously offend God, or if, without his own fault, he was not entirely master of his actions; or if he is uncertain whether he consented to the sinful act or remembers that he proceeded timidly or in doubt.

Though, strictly speaking, no mortal sin can become venial, and no venial sin mortal, because of the essential difference existing between the two, a person who constantly commits venial sins with full deliberation thereby forms evil habits,

which will sooner or later precipitate him into mortal sin and rob his soul of sanctifying grace. It is in this sense that the Scholastics say that venial sin disposes the soul to mortal sin.[6]

[6] Cfr. Ecclus. XIX, 1; Luke XVI, 10.—St. Augustine, *Tract. in Ioa.*, 12, n. 14: *"Minuta plura peccata si neglegantur, occidunt. Minutae sunt guttae, quae flumina implent, minuta sunt grana arenae, sed si multa arena imponatur, premit atque opprimit. Hoc facit sentina neglecta, quod facit fluctus irruens, paulatim per sentinam intrat, sed diu intrando et non exhauriendo mergit navim. Quid est autem exhaurire nisi bonis operibus agere, ne obruant peccata, gemendo, ieiunando, tribuendo, ignoscendo?"* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXV, 1492).—Idem, *Serm.*, 56, c. 9, n. 12: *"Ista omnia, si colligantur contra nos, num ideo non premunt, quia minuta sunt? Quid interest, utrum te plumbum premat an arena? Plumbum una massa est, arena minuta grana sunt, sed copiâ te premunt. Minuta sunt peccata. Non vides de guttis minutis flumina impleri et fundos trahi? Minuta sunt, sed multa sunt."* (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 383).—Idem, *Serm.*, 58, c. 9, n. 10: *"Dimittantur peccata, dimittantur praeterita, cessent futura. Sed non potes hic vivere sine ipsis, vel minora vel minuta sint, vel levia sint. Sed ipsa levia et minuta non contemnantur. De minutis guttis flumina implentur. Non contemnantur vel minora. Per angustas rimulas navis insudat aqua, impletur sentina, et si contemnatur sentina, mergitur navis."* (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 398).—Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 292 (*al.* 244 *de tempore*), n. 6: *"Noli despicere peccata tua, quia parva sunt, sed time, quia plura sunt. Nam et pluviarum guttae minutae sunt, sed flumina implent et moles trahunt et arbores cum suis radicibus tollunt."* (*P. L.*, XXXIX, 2999).—St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, l. 10, c. 11, n. 21: *"Ex vanitate ad iniquitatem ducimur."* (*P. L.*, LXXV, 933).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, q. 88, art. 3: *"Peccatum veniale potest disponere per quandam consequentiam ad peccatum, quod est mortale ex parte agentis. Augmentata enim dispositione vel habitu per actus peccatorum venialium intantum potest libido peccandi crescere, quod ille, qui peccat, finem suum constituet in peccato veniali. Nam unicuique habenti habitum, inquantum huiusmodi, finis est operatio secundum habitum, et sic multoties peccando venialiter disponetur ad peccatum mortale."*—Idem, *ibid.*, art. 4: *"Non omnia peccata venialia de mundo possunt habere tantum de reatu, quantum unum peccatum mortale. . . . Si vero intellegatur, quod multa peccata venialia faciunt unum mortale dispositive, sic verum est . . . secundum duos modos dispositionis, quibus peccatum veniale disponit ad mortale."*—Idem, *ibid.*, 2a 2ae, q. 186, art. 9: *"Peccatum veniale est dispositio ad mortale, inquantum impedit ea, quibus aliquis disponitur ad observanda principalia praecepta legis Christi, quae sunt praecepta caritatis."*—Cfr. J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. 1, n. 153: *"Peccata venialia quantumvis multiplicata per se et ratione multiplicationis nunquam in mortale*

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 1a 2ae, qu. 88.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie,* pp. 161 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. I, pp. 136 sqq.—H. Gerigk, *Wesen und Voraussetzungen der Totsünde, Untersuchung der Frage nach dem Wesensunterschiede zwischen dem Peccatum Mortale und Veniale,* Breslau 1903, especially pp. 96 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 328 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.,* Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 193 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.,* 22nd ed., pp. 113 sqq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.,* Vol. II, pp. 253 sqq.—L. Billot, S.J., *Disquisitio de Natura et Ratione Peccati,* Rome 1900, th. I sqq.—H. E. Manning, *Sin and its Consequences,* Ch. I, sqq. (French tr. by Maillet, *Le Peché et ses Conséquences,* Avignon 1894, Ch. I sqq.).

coalescere possunt, quia singula in specie inferiori manent. Quandoque tamen ratione materiae coalescentis ad mortale deveniunt, ut in materia iustitiae praesertim accidit."

SECTION 4

TEMPTATIONS AND OCCASIONS OF SIN

The cause of personal sin (*causa deficiens*),[1] as we have seen, is free-will. "If any one saith," defines the Tridentine Council, "that it is not in man's power to make his ways evil, but that the works that are evil God worketh as well as those that are good, not permissibly only, but properly and of Himself, in such wise that the treason of Judas is no less His own proper work than the vocation of Paul; let him be anathema."[2]—"Man's will alone," says St. Thomas, "is directly the cause of his sin."[3] And St. Augustine:

1 Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, XII, c. 7: *"Nemo quaerat efficientem causam malae voluntatis, non enim est efficiens, sed deficiens, quia nec illa effectio est, sed defectio. Deficere namque ab eo, quod summe est, ad id, quod minus est, hoc est incipere habere voluntatem malam."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLI, 355).

2 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 6: *"Si quis dixerit, non esse in potestate hominis, vias suas malas facere, sed mala opera, ita ut bona, Deum operari, non permissive solum, sed etiam proprie et per se, adeo ut sit proprium eius opus non minus proditio Iudae, quam vocatio Pauli; anathema sit."*

3 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 80, art. 1: *"Sola voluntas hominis est directe causa peccati eius."*—Cfr. *De Malo*, qu. 3, art. 3: *"Actus voluntatis nihil aliud est, quam inclinatio quaedam voluntatis in volitum, sicut et appetitus naturalis nihil est aliud, quam inclinatio naturae ad aliquid. Inclinatio autem naturae est et a forma naturali et ab eo, qui dedit formam, unde dicitur, quod motus ignis sursum est ab eius levitate et a generante, quod talem formam creavit. Sic ergo motus voluntatis directe procedit a voluntate et a Deo, qui est voluntatis causa, qui solus in voluntate operatur et voluntatem inclinare pot-*

"It is written into every heart by the hand of God that sin is impossible without the coöperation of the will."[4] The will can excite concupiscence and proceed from desire to act, thus producing sin, as it were, out of itself. The will may also be seduced by outside influences (*causae occasionales*). Of these there are chiefly two, *viz.*: temptation and occasion.

I. TEMPTATIONS.—Temptation, broadly speaking, is a testing or trial of the will. Defined more narrowly, it is a direct incitement to evil which stirs up concupiscence and thereby causes a struggle between the good and the evil forces of nature.

A temptation may be either internal or external, and it may proceed from God (*tentatio probationis*), or from the devil, or from the world, or from concupiscence.[5]

1. Christ exhorts all men to pray, "Lead us not into temptation."[6] St. Paul says that God suffers all to be tempted.[7] Hence there are temptations that come from God. Not, of course, as

est in quodcunque voluerit. Deus autem non est causa peccati. Relinquitur ergo, quod nihil aliud sit directe causa peccati humani nisi voluntas."

4 *De Duab. Anim. c. Manich.*, c. 11, n. 15: *"Peccatum sine voluntate esse non posse omnis mens apud se divinitus conscriptum legit."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLII, 105.)

5 Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 13: *"Pugna, quae superest cum carne, cum mundo, cum diabolo."*—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 344 (*al.* 31), n. 1: *"Hic propositus nobis agon, haec lucta cum carne, haec lucta cum diabolo, haec lucta cum saeculo."* (*P. L.*, XXXIX, 1512).

6 Matth. VI, 13.

7 1 Cor. X, 13.—Cfr. Gen. XXII, 1; Deut. XIII, 3; Tob. XII, 13.

if God seduced His creatures to sin. "Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God, for God is not a tempter of evils, and he tempteth no man." [8] "When He 'tempts' a man," says Dr. Pohle, "He simply 'tries his faith,' as in the case of Adam and Abraham; which is quite compatible with His infinite holiness." [9] God tries man's faith, not merely in a passive manner, by allowing him to be tempted, but sometimes actively, by sending him trials and worries which may become a source of temptation and thereby a means of probing his character. But St. Paul tells us that God never allows man to be tempted beyond his strength.[10] And St. James assures us: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him." [11] Hence Au-

8 Jas. I, 13: Ὁ θεὸς ἀπείραστός ἐστιν κακῶν, πειράζει δὲ αὐτὸς οὐδένα.

9 Pohle-Preuss, *God the Author of Nature and the Supernatural*, 2nd ed., St. Louis 1916, p. 345.

10 1 Cor. X, 13.

11 Jas. I, 12.—St. Ambrose, *De Abraham*, l. 1, c. 8, n. 66: "*Aliter Deus tentat, aliter diabolus. Diabolus tentat, ut subruat, Deus tentat, ut coronet. Denique probatos sibi tentat. Unde et David dicit: Proba me, Deus, et tenta me* (Ps. 138, 23). *Et sanctum Abraham probavit ante et sic tentavit, ne si ante tentaret quam probasset, gravaret. . . . Non enim volebat Deus immolari a patre filium nec impleri hoc munus volebat, qui ovem pro filio immolandam obtulit, sed tentabat affectum patris, si Dei praecepta praeferret illo nec paternae pietatis contemplatione vim devotionis inflecteret.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XIV, 445).—Idem, *ibid.*, n. 76: "*Affectum tuum inquisivi, non factum exegi. Tentavi mentem tuam, si etiam filio dilectissimo non parceres propter me. Non aufero, quod donavi ipse nec heredem invideo, quem largitus sum non habenti.*" (*P. L.*, XIV, 448).—*Epist.*, 51, n. 11: "*Homo es et tibi venit tentatio, vince eam.*" (*P. L.*, XVI, 1162). *Expos. Evang. sec. Luc.*, l. 4, n. 41:

gustine's exhortation: "It is not good for us to be without temptations, nor should we ask God that we be not tempted, but rather that we be not led into temptation." [12]

2. THE DEVIL.—Sin originated with the devil. He "sinneth from the beginning." [13] He is "the prince," [14] "the god of this world," [15] a murderer and a liar,[16] "the tempter" *par excellence,*[17] who seduced our first parents,[18] and tempted Job,[19] Ananias and Saphira,[20] Judas,[21] nay our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.[22] The Apostles repeatedly warn the faithful against this sinister foe, who is the more dangerous because, according to St. Paul, he transforms himself into an angel of light.[23] In view of the plain scriptural teaching on the subject no Christian needs to be assured that belief in the evil one is not a "remnant of medieval superstition," or that the devil is not merely a "symbol of evil." [24] On the other hand, we must not lose

"Qui vult coronam dare, tentationes suggerit. Et si quando tentaberis, cognosce, quia paratur corona. Tolle martyrum certamina, tulisti coronas, tolle cruciatus, tulisti beatitudines." (*P. L.*, XV, 1625).

12 *Enarr. in Ps.*, 63, n. 1: *"Non nobis expedit esse sine tentationibus nec rogemus Deum, ut non tentemur, sed ut non inducamur in tentationem."* (*P. L.*, XXXVI, 761).

13 1 John III, 8.

14 John XIV, 30.

15 2 Cor. XI, 3; John XII, 31.

16 Gen. III, 1–6.

17 Matth. IV, 3.

18 John VIII, 44.

19 Job I, 12.

20 Acts III, 5.

21 Luke XXII, 31; John XIII, 2.

22 2 Cor. XI, 3.

23 1 Cor. VII, 5. Cfr. 2 Cor. XI, 14; Eph. VI, 11–17; 1 Pet. V, 8–9.

24 Cfr. M. Hagen, S.J., *Der Teufel im Lichte der Glaubensquellen*, Freiburg 1899.—Th. H. Simar, *Die Theologie des hl. Paulus*, 2nd ed., pp. 67 sqq.; J. G. Raupert, *Hell and its Problems*, pp. 82 sqq.

sight of the fact that Satan is a creature dependent upon God and limited in power. He is a dangerous tempter, but he can compel no man to do wrong. His power amounts to nothing unless he can get man to consent to his evil suggestions. "It is our will, not his power that delivers us into his hands," says St. Bernard.[25] "However great the power and pertinacity of Satan," says the Roman Catechism, "he cannot, in his deadly hatred of our race, tempt or torment us as much or as long as he pleases; but all his power is governed by the control and permission of God." [26] There is an apt comparison of the devil to a chained dog in a sermon attributed to St. Augustine.[27]

25 *De Gratia et Lib. Arbitrio*, c. 6, n. 18: *"Diabolo nostra nos mancipat voluntas, non ipsius potestas."* (Migne, *P. L.*, CLXXXII, 1011).—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 63, n. 1: *"Alligatus est quidem diabolus, ne faciat, quantum potest, ne faciat, quantum vult, tamen tantum tentare sinitur, quantum expedit proficientibus."* (*P. L.*, XXXVI, 761).—Idem, *ibid.*, 103, s. 3, n. 22: *"Nec tentari quis potest a diabolo nisi permittente Deo . . . aut ad damnandos impios aut ad probandos pios."* (*P. L.*, XXXVII, 1375).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 80, art. 3: *"Diabolus propriâ virtute, nisi refraenetur a Deo, potest aliquem inducere ex necessitate ad faciendum aliquem actum, qui de suo genere peccatum est; non autem potest inducere necessitatem peccandi. Quod patet ex hoc, quod homo motivo ad peccandum non resistit nisi per rationem, cuius usum totaliter impedire potest movendo imaginationem et appetitum sensitivum, sicut in arreptitiis patet. Sed tunc ratione sic ligatâ quidquid homo agat, non imputatur ei ad peccatum. Sed si ratio non sit totaliter ligata, ex ea parte, qua est libera, potest resistere peccato. Unde manifestum est, quod diabolus nullo modo potest necessitatem inducere ad peccandum."*

26 *Catech. Rom.*, P. 4, c. 15, qu. 8: *"Non Satan in tanta et potentia et pertinacia, in capitali odio nostri generis nec quantum nec quamdiu vult, tentare nos aut vexare potest, sed omnis eius potestas Dei nutu et permissu gubernatur."*—Cfr. J. Wirtz, *Die Lehre von der Apolytrosis*, Treves 1906, pp. 31 sqq.

27 Cfr. Pseudo-Augustine, *Append.*

As regards the manner in which the devil proceeds, note that he is himself a creature, and therefore cannot read the souls of men, but judges their state by the natural manifestations of their thoughts and purposes.[28] Nor can he exercise a direct influence upon the human will. His methods are necessarily indirect and circuitous, though for that reason no less effective. He works upon the imagination, blindfolds reason, stirs up the passions, etc. "The devil," says St. Thomas, is a cause of sin, not directly or sufficiently, but only by persuasion, or by proposing the object of appetite." [29] He is "the enemy"

Serm., 37 (*al.* 197 *de tempore*), n. 6: "*Alligatus est tanquam innexus canis catenis et neminem potest mordere nisi eum, qui se ad illum ultro mortiferâ securitate coniunxerit. Iam videte, fratres, quam stultus homo ille est, quem canis in catena positus mordet. Tu te ad illum per voluntates et cupiditates saeculi noli coniungere, et ille ad te non praesumet accedere. Latrare potest, sollicitare potest, mordere non potest nisi volentem. Non enim cogendo, sed suadendo nocet, nec extorquet a nobis consensum, sed petit.*"—The last sentence is taken from the *Epistula Pelagii ad Demetriadem*, c. 25 (*ibid.*, XXXIII, 1117).—Cfr. *Brev. Rom., Dom. IV post Pent., Lect. II Noct.*

28 Cfr. St. Jerome, *In Ps.*, 6, 20: "*Diabolus in animâ intrinsecus nescit, quid cogitet homo, nisi per exteriores motus intellegat.*"

29 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 80, art. 1: "*Diabolus non est causa peccati directe vel sufficienter, sed solum per modum persuadentis vel proponentis appetibile.*"—Cfr. *De Malo*, qu. 3, art. 2: "*Quum humana voluntas a nullo de necessitate moveatur obiecto, sed a se, diabolus non per se est causa peccati, sed tantum per modum suadentis vel proponentis obiectum appetibile.*"—*Ibid.*, art. 4: "*Quamvis autem diabolus secundum ordinem suae naturae posset homini aliquid persuadere, intellectum eius illuminando, sicut facit bonus angelus, non tamen hoc facit, quia intellectus, quanto magis illuminatur, tanto magis potest sibi cavere a deceptione, quam diabolus intendit. Unde relinquitur, quod persuasio interior diaboli et quaecunque eius revelatio non fit per illuminationem intellectus, sed solum per impressionem quandam in vires sensitivas interiores aut exteriores. . . . Per modum autem disponentis potest esse causa peccati, inquantum per similem commotionem spirituum et humorum facit aliquos magis disposi-*

who came and "sowed cockle among the wheat while men were asleep." [30]

While it must be admitted that the devil, "the prince of this world," has a share in every sin, it would be wrong to assume that all temptations come from him. Sacred Scripture points to concupiscence as the principal source of sin. "Every man is tempted by his own concupiscence." [31] The fact that sin is often inspired by the devil, does not, of course, render it less culpable. Not to speak of concupiscence, which exercises a powerful influence over every human heart, man himself is but too often the tempter and seducer of his fellowmen.[32]

3. THE WORLD.—"This present wicked world," [33] which is full of sin and impiety,[34] and hates God and His servants,[35] is another prolific source of sin. The term *world,* as used in the Scriptures, denotes either the physical universe or the human race. In the former sense, *i. e.,*

tos ad irascendum vel ad concupiscendum vel ad aliquod huiusmodi. Manifestum est enim, quod corpore aliqualiter disposito est homo magis pronus ad concupiscentiam et iram et huiusmodi passiones, quibus insurgentibus homo disponitur ad consensum. Sic ergo patet, quod diabolus interius instigat ad peccatum persuadendo et disponendo, non autem perficiendo peccatum."

30 Matth. XIII, 25.—On the temptation of Job St. Ambrose remarks: "*Adhibetur mulier, primae fraudis illecebra; . . . amici adhibentur, qui pravis consiliis opprimant reluctantem.*" (*Expos. Evang. sec. Luc.,* IV, n. 39; Migne, *P. L.,* XV, 1624).

31 Jas. I, 14 sq.; cfr. Rom. VII, 20; Gal. V, 17.

32 Cfr. the Catechism of the Council of Trent, P. IV, c. 15, qu. 10.

33 Gal. I, 4.

34 John VII, 7; XIV, 17.

35 John XV, 18 sq.; XVI, 20, 33; XVII, 9, 14, 25.—Cfr. Simar, *Die Theologie des hl. Paulus,* 2nd ed., pp. 72 sqq.; Tillmann, *Die Wiederkunft Christi,* Freiburg 1909, pp. 25 sqq.

as the aggregate of material things, "the world" deceives and lures man away from His Creator. Taken in the latter sense, *i. e.*, as humanity, especially in the state of original sin and estranged from the true Church, "the world" is full of direct and indirect temptations—seduction, denial of truth, scandal, heresies and perverted ideals, a corrupt civilization, a mendacious press, debased arts, etc. This sad state of affairs accounts for St. John's warning: "Love not the world, nor the things which are in the world; if any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him." [86]

4. Concupiscence.—Concupiscence is the inordinate leaning of human nature towards evil. It results from the fall of our first parents [87] and is the most prolific source of temptations. St. James says: "Every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured. Then when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. But sin, when it is completed, begetteth death." [88] Concupiscence manifests itself through the eyes and the flesh, and

86 1 John II, 15; cfr. Matth. XVIII, 7; Rom. XII, 2; Col. III, 2. —St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 80 (*al.* 23 *de Divers.*), n. 8: *"Malus est mundus, ecce malus est et sic amatur, quasi bonum esset. Quid est autem malus mundus? Non enim malum est caelum et terra et aquae et quae sunt in eis, pisces, volatilia, arbores. Omnia ista bona sunt, sed malum mundum mali homines faciunt."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 498).

87 Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *God the Author of Nature and the Supernatural*, pp. 203, 217.

88 Jas. I, 14–15; cfr. Jas. IV, 1; Gen. II, 6; IV, 7.—*Supra*, Vol. I, pp. 116 sqq.

also in the form of pride. Though not a sin in itself, it is "of sin and inclines to sin." [39] It is "an incentive" to sin, and becomes sinful only when freely consented to.[40]

Concupiscence is in all human beings (with the exception of the Blessed Virgin Mary [41]), but manifests itself differently [42] according to temperament, age, sex, disposition, heredity, education, training, association, manner of life, and other factors. Every man has his own temptations according to his peculiar constitution of body and soul. But each also has his own means of fighting temptation. Hence, while no man is free from concupiscence and temptation, no one is tempted beyond his strength. Every man is able, with the aid of grace, to overcome temptations. Nay, more, he can and should convert them into means of spiritual progress. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love

39 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. V, can. 5. —Cfr. 1 John II, 16; Rom. XIII, 23.—*Prop. Damnat. Baii*, n. 50 sq., 74-76 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1050 sq., 1073 sqq.).—Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 438 sqq.

40 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. V, can. 5.

41 Pius IX, Bull *"Ineffab. Deus"* (Dec. 13, 1854).—St. Augustine, *De Nat. et Grat.*, c. 36, n. 42: *"Exceptâ sanctâ Virgine Maria, de qua propter honorem Domini nullam prorsus, quum de peccatis agitur, haberi volo quaestionem."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 267). Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *Mariology*, pp. 72 sqq.

42 Cfr. St. Ambrose, *Expos. in Evang. sec. Luc.*, IV, n. 39: *"Diversitas ipsa tentationum pro diversitate certantium est."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XV, 1624).—Cfr. Pius IX, Bull *"Ineffabilis Deus."*

him." [43] Temptation, therefore, is designed to test and steel the character.[44]

Christ allowed the devil to tempt Him in order to show by His example how temptation should be withstood. Moreover, He expressly designated the most effective means of combatting it, *viz.*: watchfulness and prayer,[45] the practice of the theological virtues, conscientious fidelity to duty, faithful perseverance in one's vocation, mortification, in short, imitating Him in all things. "If any man will come after me," He says, "let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." [46]

In many temptations, especially those against chastity, salvation lies in flight.[47]

"Brethren," admonishes St. Paul, "be strong in the Lord and in the might of his power. Put ye on the full armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of this world of darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in regions above. Therefore take

43 Jas. I, 12; cfr. Gen. IV, 7; 1 Cor. X, 13; Heb. II, 18; 1 Pet. V, 9.

44 Cfr. Hense, *Die Versuchungen*, 3rd ed., pp. 114 sqq.

45 Matth. XXVI, 41.—Cfr. St. Ambrose, *De Cain et Abel*, l. 1, c. 5, n. 16: *"Docuit te certe Dominus Iesus, quemadmodum adversus huiusmodi tentationes resistas."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XIV, 325).—IDEM, *Expos. Evang. sec. Lucam*, IV, n. 17: *"Tria praecipue docemur esse tela diaboli, quibus ad convulnerandam mentem hominis consuevit armari: gulae unum, aliud iactantiae, ambitionis tertium. Inde autem coepit, unde iam vicit. Et ideo inde incipio in Christo vincere, unde in Adam victus sum; si tamen mihi Christus imago Patris, virtutis exemplum sit. Discamus igitur cavere gulam, cavere luxuriam, quia telum est diaboli. . . . Didicisti igitur diaboli telum, sume scutum fidei, loricam abstinentiae."* (*P. L.*, XV, 1617).

46 Matth. XVI, 24; cfr. Luke XIV, 27; 1 Cor. IX, 27.

47 Cfr. Gen. XXXIX, 12; 1 Cor. VI, 18; Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm.* 293 (*al.* 250 *de Temp.*), n. 1: *"Contra libidinis impetum apprehende fugam, si vis obtinere victoriam."* (*P. L.*, XXXIX, 2301).—Cfr. Homer's Odyssey, XII, 120.

ye up the full armor of God, that ye may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand, therefore, with your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation [to carry] the gospel of peace: taking up withal the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God). With all prayer and supplication pray at all times in the spirit; and in the same watching with all instance and supplication . . ."[48]

"When you are tempted," says the Venerable Don Bosco, "shake off the thought of evil and do not wait until temptation has gained possession of your heart, but ward it off by work or prayer."

II. Occasions of Sin.—An occasion is an external circumstance which leads one to commit sin. An occasion, therefore, is not a temptation; but it may become a temptation by causing evil thoughts to arise in the mind and thus inciting concupiscence. However, not every occasion necessarily entails temptation, and many temptations arise without any external incitement whatever. It is important for the confessor to keep this fact in mind, because habitual and occasional sinners must be treated differently.[49]

[48] Eph. VI, 10–18.—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 136, n. 22: "*Si vultis armati esse contra tentationes in saeculo, crescat et roboretur desiderium Ierusalem aeternae in cordibus vestris.*" (*P. L.*, XXXVII, 1774).

[49] Cfr. Pighi, *De Iudicio Sacramentali*, pp. 39 sqq., 59 sqq.; E. Berardi, *De Recidivis et Occasionariis*,

Occasions, like temptations, are an indispensable test of virtue. "Who hath been tried . . . and made perfect," says Holy Scripture, "he shall have glory everlasting: he that could have transgressed and could do evil things, and hath not done them." [50]

1. All men are in duty bound to avoid, or, if they cannot avoid, to overcome or resist the occasions of sin.[51] To determine this duty more definitely, the Scholastics have evolved the following distinctions:

a) Proximate and Remote Occasions.—An occasion is proximate (*occasio proxima*) if it leads a person to commit sin oftener than not. It is remote (*occasio remota*) if it leads to the commission of sin only once in a while.

A proximate occasion of sin may be either absolute or relative. It is absolute or proximate in itself (*occasio absolute sive per se proxima*) if it constitutes a danger for every man and in all circumstances. It is relative (*occasio per accidens sive relative proxima*) if the danger it involves differs according to individual character or disposition. Relatively proximate occasions are, *e. g.*, strong drink, the theatre, a certain class of books, plays, etc.

3rd ed., Faventiae 1882; Aertnys, C.SS.R., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 7th ed., pp. 192 sqq.; Reuter-Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Neo-Confessarius*, pp. 274 sqq.

50 Ecclus. XXXI, 10; cfr. 1 Cor. V, 10.

51 Ecclus. III, 27; XXXI, 10; Matth. V, 29–30; Mark IX, 41–46.

b) Voluntary and Necessary Occasions.—An occasion is voluntary (*occasio voluntaria*) if sought or wilfully persisted in after one has gotten into it involuntarily. A necessary occasion (*occasio necessaria*) is one that can be avoided only by the use of extraordinary diligence or not at all. In the latter case it is called physically necessary (*occasio physice necessaria*). Such temptations may grow out of the mutual intercourse of parents and children, married persons, soldiers, prisoners, etc. If it is more difficult to avoid an occasion than to keep from sinning by the use of proper precautions, an occasion is called morally necessary (*occasio moraliter necessaria*). Occasions of this kind cannot, as a rule, be avoided without great inconvenience or injury. They invariably involve a grave conflict of duties.[52] On the one side there is the duty of avoiding the proximate occasion of sin; on the other are such unavoidable professional obligations as, *e. g.*, hearing confession, practicing medicine, etc.

Hence the further distinction between *occasio quae est in esse* and *occasio quae non est in esse.* Occasions of the former class entail immediate danger of sin, whereas those of the latter leave an opportunity of escaping the danger. As an example of the former kind we may mention visiting a house of prostitution.[53]

52 See Vol. I, pp. 211 sqq.

53 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in*

2. Practical Hints.—As a general rule it is forbidden to seek an occasion of sin, even though it be only remote, for "He that loveth danger shall perish in it." [54] On the other hand no man is bound to avoid all remote occasions, for this is impossible.[55] But every man is strictly bound:

a) To avoid all proximate and voluntary occasions of (grievous) sin, and also those morally necessary occasions that entail immediate danger (*occasiones in esse*).[56] It is a mortal sin to expose oneself voluntarily and without necessity to the danger of committing a mortal sin or to remain inactive towards such danger in a case of necessity, even though the sin be not committed, for to remain voluntarily in the proximate occasion of sin is deliberately to choose evil. Innocent XI condemned the proposition that it is licit to absolve a man who remains in the proximate occasion of mortal sin, though able to get away from it.[57]

b) If a man finds himself in a morally neces-

Ps., 50, n. 3: "*Mulier longe, libido prope. Alibi erat quod* [*David*] *videret, in illo unde caderet.*" (*P. L.*, XXXVI, 587).

54 Ecclus. III, 27.

55 Cfr. 1 Cor. V, 9–10; John XVII, 15.

56 Cfr. Prov. VI, 27–28; XVIII, 6–10; Matth. V, 29–30; Mark IX, 41–46.

57 *Prop. Damnat. sub Innocentio XI*, n. 61: "*Potest aliquando absolvi qui in proxima occasione peccandi versatur, quam potest et non vult omittere, quinimo directe et ex proposito quaerit aut ei se ingerit.*" No. 62: "*Proxima occasio peccandi non est fugienda, quando causa aliqua utilis aut honesta non fugiendi occurrit.*" No. 63: "*Licitum est quaerere directe occasionem proximam peccandi pro bono spirituali vel temporali nostro vel proximi.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion*, n. 1078–1080).

sary proximate occasion of sin, which does not involve immediate danger (*quae non est in esse*), he is in duty bound to convert the same into a remote occasion by fervent prayer, devout reception of the Sacraments, frequent renewal of the firm purpose of not consenting to sin, and especially by avoiding the company of those with whom he has sinned before or of whom he has reason to apprehend that they will tempt him. Should these means prove ineffective, all other considerations must be set aside and the occasion strictly shunned, even at the risk of life.

c) A physically necessary occasion which cannot be gotten away from, must be neutralized by the use of extreme caution and other available means. If a man is a proximate occasion of sin to himself, he should mortify his body and try everything in his power to control his passions. "I chastise my body," says St. Paul, "and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." [58] A warning example to all is Peter's denial of Christ.[59]

READINGS.—F. Hense, *Die Versuchungen und ihre Gegenmittel,* 3rd ed., Freiburg 1902.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 220 sq.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 1a, qu. 114, art. 1-5.—Th. H. Simar, *Die Theologie des hl. Paulus,* 2nd ed., pp. 67 sqq.—M. Hagen, S.J., *Der Teufel im Lichte der Glaubensquellen,* Freiburg 1899.—W. H. Kent, art. "Devil"

58 1 Cor. IX, 27.

59 Matth. XXVI, 69 sqq.

in the *Cath. Encyclopedia,* Vol. IV, pp. 766 sq.—J. J. Ming, S.J., art. "Concupiscence," *ibid.,* Vol. IV, p. 208.—J. F. Delany, art. "Temptation," *ibid.,* Vol. XIV, p. 504.—IDEM, art. "Occasions of Sin," *ibid.,* Vol. XI, pp. 196 sq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Past.,* Vol. II, pp. 248 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 322 sqq., 360 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.,* Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 358 sqq., 364 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S. J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.,* 22nd ed., pp. 751 sq.—A. Konings, C.SS.R., *Theol. Mor.,* 2nd ed., New York, 1876, Vol. II, pp. 161 sqq.—St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction à la Vie Dévote,* Part II, Ch. 18, Part IV, Ch. 3-6.

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPAL KINDS OF SIN

SECTION I

GENERAL DIVISION

To enable men to understand the nature of sin, and for the practical purposes of catechetical instruction and Penance, Catholic moralists have divided sins into classes.

The most important division is that of mortal and venial sins, already dealt with in the previous chapter.

Other divisions are based respectively on the Decalogue, the duties violated by sin, the nature of man, the intrinsic character of different sins, man's relation towards himself and others, and the development of evil in the soul.

1. Sins Against the Ten Commandments.—The most popular division of sins is that which follows the Decalogue or Ten Commandments. This classification was confirmed by Christ Himself and adopted by St. Paul.[1] The order is not strictly logical, however, nor is it quite exhaustive,

1 Matth. V, 21 sqq.; XV, 19; XIX, 18; Mark X, 19 (a different order in Mark VII, 21 sq.); 1 Tim. I, 9 sq. (different in Rom. XIII, 9).—Cfr. N. Peters, *Die älteste Abschrift der zehn Gebote und der Papyrus*

and hence the enumeration of sins based upon it is more or less external and does not, in fact, transcend the standpoint of the Old Law, except in so far as it interprets the Decalogue in the light of the New Testament. Nevertheless this division is useful, especially for the examination of conscience, which is one of the requisites of a good confession.[2]

The sins against the Ten Commandments are enumerated in the following verses, handed down by the Schoolmen:

Est Deus, est nomen, sunt sabbata suntque parentes,
Mors, moechus, furtum, testis falsus, domus (et) uxor.

Or, in amplified form:

Idola sperne, Dei non sit tibi nomen inane,
Sabbato sanctifices, habeas in honore parentes,
Non occisor eris, moechus, fur, testis iniquus,
Non alii nuptam, non rem cupias alienam.

2. Sins of Commission and Omission.—This classification is purely formal and of no particular value for judging the nature of sin.

a) When all other conditions are equal, a sin of commission is worse than a sin of omission because the negative precepts of the law bind under a more serious penalty than those which are affirmative, and to transgress them involves a

Nash, Freiburg 1905; M. Hetzenauer, *Theologia Biblica*, Vol. I, Freiburg 1908, pp. 634 sqq.

2 This division is adopted by Sabetti, Slater, Noldin, and other present-day moralists.

more determined effort of the will. Since, however, sins of omission suppose a positive act of the will—refusal to obey God—and hence are voluntary, they, too, may be mortal.[3] Sins of omission, futhermore, are often more dangerous to the soul than sins of commission, because less attention is paid to them, and they are rarely made the object of contrition and penitence by the careless.

b) The division of sins into sins against God, against oneself, and against one's fellowmen[4] is likewise purely external, because every sin is by its very nature an offense against God and oneself, and in a certain sense also against one's fellowmen. Nevertheless, this classification is useful, and derives additional justification from the fact that some sins are more directly opposed than others to the duties which man owes to God, to his fellowmen, and to himself.

3. Sins of the Spirit and Sins of the Flesh.—This distinction is based on the composite nature of man and is mentioned in Sacred Scripture. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit."[5] Man is a compound of body and soul, and hence none of the sins that he is able to commit is either entirely spirit-

3 Cfr. Matth. VII, 19; XXV, 30. —St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 6.

4 Cfr. Matth. XXII, 36-40; Tit. II, 12.—St. Thomas, *ibid.*, art. 4.

5 2 Cor. VII, 1.—Cfr. Matth. IV, 1-11; 1 Pet. II, 11; 1 John II, 16.

ual or entirely carnal. True, the Bible sometimes applies the term "flesh" (σάρξ) to human nature as corrupted by sin, and St. Paul enumerates envy, wrath, dissension, etc., among "the works of the flesh." [6] But this cannot alter the obvious fact that a real distinction exists between spiritual sins (*peccata spiritualia*) and carnal sins (*peccata carnalia*).

A carnal sin is one by which man gratifies some disorderly inclination of his sensitive nature—concupiscence of the eyes or concupiscence of the flesh. By the commission of such a sin man, who is a rational creature, subjects himself, as it were, to matter. The chief sins of the flesh are fornication, luxury, gluttony, avarice, greed, idolatry, and witchcraft.

Sins of the spirit are committed by indulging the disorderly inclinations that have their seat in the mind, *e. g.*, pride, envy, hatred.[7] These, to borrow a phrase from St. Thomas, are "the sins which consist in spiritual pleasure." [8]

Which of these two species is the more dangerous or the more grievous is difficult to say. Sins of the flesh easily develop into habits and attain consummation; but

6 Gal. V, 19–21; cfr. 1 Cor. III, 3.—Cfr. H. H. Wendt, *Die Begriffe Fleisch und Geist im biblischen Sprachgebrauch*, Gotha 1878, pp. 42 sqq., 78 sqq.

7 Matth. IV, 1–9; Gal. V, 20; 1 John II, 16.

8 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 2: "*Illa peccata, quae perficiuntur in delectatione spirituali, vocantur peccata spiritualia; illa vero, quae perficiuntur in delectatione carnali, vocantur peccata carnalia, sicut gula, quae perficitur in*

their guilt is diminished by the weakening of the will due to concupiscence. Sins of the spirit, on the other hand, involve greater malice and self-deception,—a circumstance that renders conversion more difficult, nay often impossible. Christ Himself assured the haughty Pharisees: "The publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you." [9] No sin is greater or more dangerous than pride and excessive self-esteem. St. Augustine observes that "A humble sinner is better than a just man puffed up with pride." [10] Christ says that the publican "went down into his house justified," whereas the Pharisee did not; and He adds: "Every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." Broadly speaking, we may say that the sins of the flesh are less culpable than those of the spirit, but involve greater shame.[11]

delectatione ciborum, et luxuria, quae perficitur in delectatione venereorum. Unde et Apostolus dicit (2 Cor. VII, 1): 'Emundemus nos ab omni iniquitate carnis et spiritus.'"

9 Matth. XXI, 31; cfr. Matth. XXIII, 13–33; Luke VII, 36–48; XVIII, 14; John VIII, 3–11.

10 *Serm.*, 170, n. 7: *"Melior est peccator humilis, quam iustus superbus."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 930).

11 Cfr. Luke XVIII, 14. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 93, n. 15: *"Videte, fratres, placuit Deo magis humilitas in malis factis quam superbia in bonis factis: sic odit Deus superbos."* (*P. L.*, XXXVII, 1203). —St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 73, art. 5: *"Peccata spiritualia sunt maioris culpae, quam peccata carnalia. Quod non est sic intellegendum, quasi quodlibet peccatum spirituale sit maioris culpae quolibet peccato carnali, sed quia considerată hac sola differentiă spiritualitatis et carnalitatis, graviora sunt, quam cetera peccata ceteris paribus. Cuius ratio triplex potest assignari: prima quidem ex parte subiecti, nam peccata spiritualia pertinent ad spiritum, cuius est converti ad Deum et ab eo averti, peccata vero carnalia consummantur in delectatione carnalis appetitus, ad quem principaliter pertinet ad bonum corporale converti, et ideo peccatum carnale, inquantum huiusmodi, plus habet de conversione, propter quod etiam est maioris adhaesionis, sed peccatum spirituale habet plus de aversione, ex qua procedit ratio culpae, et ideo peccatum spirituale, inquantum huiusmodi, est maioris culpae. Secunda ratio potest sumi ex parte eius in quem peccatur, nam peccatum carnale, inquantum huiusmodi, est in corpus proprium, quod est minus diligendum secundum ordinem caritatis, quam Deus et*

4. SINS OF THOUGHT, WORD, AND DEED.—Psychologically, we may distinguish between sins of thought, word, and deed. The Angelic Doctor explains the underlying process as follows: "The first beginning of sin is its foundation, as it were, in the heart; the second degree is the sin of word, in so far as man is ready to break out into a declaration of his thought. The third degree consists in the consummation of the deed. Consequently these three differ in respect of the various degrees of sin. Nevertheless it is evident that all three belong to the one complete species of sin, since they proceed from the same motive. For the angry man, through desire of vengeance, is at first disturbed in thought, then breaks out into words of abuse, and lastly goes on to wrongful deeds; and the same applies to lust and to any other sin." [12]

proximus, in quos peccatur per peccata spiritualia, et ideo peccata spiritualia, inquantum huiusmodi, sunt maioris culpae. Tertia ratio potest sumi ex parte motivi, quia quanto est gravius impulsivum ad peccandum, tanto homo minus peccat, peccata autem carnalia habent vehementius impulsivum, id est, ipsam concupiscentiam carnis nobis innatam, et ideo peccata spiritualia, inquantum huiusmodi, sunt maioris culpae."—IDEM, *De Verit.*, qu. 25, art. 6, ad 2: *"Peccata irascibilis sunt graviora, sed peccata concupiscibilis turpiora."*—St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, l. 33, c. 12, n. 25: *"Scimus, quia aliquando minus est in corporis corruptionem cadere, quam cogitatione tacitâ ex deliberata elatione peccare, sed quum minus turpis superbia creditur, minus vitatur. Luxuriam vero eo magis erubescunt homines, quo simul omnes turpem noverunt. Unde fit plerumque, ut nonnulli post superbiam in luxuriam corruentes ex aperto casu malum culpae latentis erubescant; et tunc etiam maiora corrigunt, quum prostrati in minimis gravius confunduntur. Reos enim se inter minora conspiciunt, qui se liberos inter graviora crediderunt."* (Migne, *P. L.*, LXXVI, 688).

12 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 7: *"Peccatum dividitur per*

Thus every sin is a sin of thought (*peccatum cordis*), because every sin originates in the mind.[13] But not every evil thought "breaks out into words," much less does it culminate in sinful deeds.[14]

a) A thought, as such, is mortally sinful if the will consents to, and takes pleasure in, the evil suggestion offered by the senses or the imagination. The technical term of Scholastic theology for such wilfully entertained evil thoughts is morose pleasure (*delectatio morosa*). "Pleasure is said to be morose, not from a delay of time (*mora*), but because the mind in deliberating dwells (*immoratur*) thereon, and fails to drive it away, 'deliberately holding and turning over what should have been cast aside as soon as it touched the mind,' as Augustine says." [15] To take pleas-

haec tria, scilicet peccatum cordis, oris et operis, non sicut per diversas species completas, nam consummatio peccati est in opere, unde peccatum operis habet speciem completam, sed prima inchoatio eius est quasi fundatio in corde; secundus autem gradus eius est in ore, secundum quod homo prorumpit facile ad manifestandum conceptum cordis; tertius autem gradus iam est in consummatione operis. Et sic haec tria differunt secundum diversos gradus peccati. Patet tamen, quod haec tria pertinent ad unam perfectam peccati speciem, quum ab eodem motivo procedant. Iracundus enim ex hoc, quod appetit vindictam, primo quidem perturbatur in corde, secundo in verba contumeliosa prorumpit, tertio vero procedit usque ad facta iniuriosa; et idem patet in luxuria et in quolibet alio peccato."—Cfr. St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, l. 4, c. 27, n. 30: "*Peccati modi vel in corde latenter fiunt vel patenter in opere perpetrantur.*" (*P. L.*, LXXV, 661).

13 Cfr. Matth. IX, 4; XII, 34; XV, 18–19; Mark VII, 20–23.—St. Jerome, *In Ierem.*, I, c. 4.—P. A. Kirsch, *Zur Geschichte der kath. Beicht*, Würzburg 1902, pp. 50 sqq.

14 Cfr. Ps. XXXIII, 13 sqq.; Prov. XVIII, 21; Matth. XII, 36 sq.; XXIII, 3; Rom. II, 6; Gal. V, 19; Eph. IV, 29; V, 4; Jas. I, 26; III, 2; 1 Pet. III, 10.

15 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 74, art. 6, ad 3: "*Delec-*

ure in an evil thought deliberately and with full advertence, is always a sin,—whether mortal or venial depends on the character of the thought itself. Not every thought of evil is in itself sinful. There is a distinction between taking pleasure in the thought of evil (*delectatio de cogitatione rei malae*) and taking pleasure in an evil object (*delectatio de re mala cogitata*). Thinking about a sin for a good and sufficient reason, *e. g.*, to study its nature and effects, to find an antidote against it, to protect others from its ravages, is not *delectatio morosa*.[16] Nor is it sinful

tatio dicitur morosa non ex mora, sed ex eo quod ratio deliberans circa eam immoratur, nec tamen eam repellit, 'tenens et volvens libenter, quae statim ut attigerunt animum, respui debuerunt,' ut Augustinus dicit (*De Trinit., XII, c. 12, n. 18*)." (Migne, *P. L.*, XLII, 1008).

16 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 74, art. 8: "*Quum omnis delectatio consequatur aliquam operationem, et iterum quum omnis delectatio habeat aliquod obiectum, delectatio quaelibet potest comparari ad duo, scilicet ad operationem, quam consequitur, et ad obiectum, in quo quis delectatur. Contingit autem, quod aliqua operatio sit obiectum delectationis sicut et aliqua alia res, quia ipsa operatio potest accipi ut bonum et finis, in quo quis delectatus requiescit. Et quandoque quidem ipsamet operatio, quam consequitur delectatio, est obiectum delectationis, inquantum scilicet vis appetiva, cuius est delectari, reflectitur in ipsam operationem, sicut in quoddam bonum, puta quum aliquis cogitat et delectatur de hoc ipso, quod cogitat, inquantum sua cogitatio ei placet; quandoque vero delectatio consequens unam operationem, puta cogitationem aliquam, habet pro obiecto aliam operationem quasi rem cogitatam, et tunc talis delectatio procedit ex inclinatione appetitus, non quidem in cogitationem, sed in operationem cogitatam. Sic igitur aliquis de fornicatione cogitans de duobus potest delectari: uno de ipsa cogitatione, alio modo de ipsa fornicatione cogitata. Delectatio autem de cogitatione ipsa sequitur inclinationem affectus in cogitationem ipsam, cogitatio autem ipsa secundum se non est peccatum mortale, immo quandoque est veniale tantum, puta, quum aliquis inutiliter cogitat de ea, quandoque autem sine peccato omnino, puta, quum aliquis utiliter de ea cogitat, sicut quum vult de ea praedicare vel disputare, et ideo per consequens affectio et delectatio, quae sic est de cogitatione fornicationis, non est de genere peccati mortalis, sed quandoque est peccatum veniale,*

to reflect with pleasure on the adroitness with which a sin has been committed, or other circumstances surrounding the same. Note, however, that the line of demarcation between what is sinful and what is permitted in such thoughts is difficult to draw. To rejoice over a sin (*gaudium de peccato*), whether it be one's own or that of another, is always forbidden.[17]

b) A thought becomes sinful as soon as the will harbors a desire to commit the evil deed (*desiderium pravum inefficax*). However, there is a distinction between conditional and unconditional desires.

A conditional desire (*desiderium conditionatum*) is sinful unless the condition takes away the malice of the act. Father Slater explains this as follows: "There is no harm, for example, in saying: 'I should like to eat meat on a Friday, unless the Church forbade it;' and the same is true generally whenever the condition, 'If it were lawful,' is annexed to a merely positive prohibi-

quandoque nullum, unde nec consensus in talem delectationem est peccatum mortale. . . . Quod autem delectetur de ipso actu cogitato, hoc aliquis cogitans de fornicatione contingit ex hoc, quod affectio eius inclinata est in hunc actum. Unde quod aliquis consentiat in talem delectationem, hoc nihil aliud est, quam quod ipse consentiat in hoc, quod affectus suus sit inclinatus in fornicationem, nullus enim delectatur nisi in eo, quod est conforme appetitui eius. Quod autem aliquis ex deliberatione eligat, quod affectus suus conformetur his, quae secundum se sunt peccata mortalia, est peccatum mortale." Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. 2, n. 12–29.

17 Prov. II, 14.—Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. sub Innocentio XI.*, n. 15: *"Licitum est filio gaudere parricidio parentis a se in ebrietate perpetrato propter ingentes divitias inde ex haereditate consecutas."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1032).

tion. If this condition is annexed to a desire against the natural law, as 'I should like to steal if it were lawful,' or 'I should like to commit fornication if it were not forbidden,' the condition does not remove all the malice of the vicious will, for the very tendency of the will toward such objects is against right reason. Such conditional desires then are sinful, unless they indicate a mere propensity towards such sins without any voluntary affection of the will. In any case, however, they are dangerous, and should not be indulged or expressed." [18]

c) A sin of thought, lastly, is a complete sin, divided from the external act only by an accident, if there is present an efficacious desire (*desiderium pravum efficax*) and a definite intention to take the necessary means to accomplish the desired end (*decretum peccandi*).[19]

Sins of word, taken generically, receive a specific malice when they are accompanied by deeds, as in contumely, lust, and the like, or when they give scandal.

St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Great, and other Fathers compare the evolution of sin from thought through word to deed with the three different ways in which our Lord raised the dead to life.[20] The analogy is striking and offers food for meditation.

18 Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p: 150.—Cfr. Gen. III, 6; 1 Cor. X, 6; Gal. V, 24.

19 Cfr. Ex. XX, 17; Matth. V, 28.

20 Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Serm. Dom. in Monte*, I, c. 12, n. 35 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, 1247);

5. Coöperation in Injustice.—Man, as a social being placed in the midst of his fellowmen, may become an occasion of, or accessory to, the sins of others.[21] The distinction between *peccata propria* and *peccata aliena* is popular rather than scientific, for in the last analysis every sin is a *peccatum proprium,* inasmuch as it is caused by the ego of the sinner. But a man may share the guilt of another's sin by becoming accessory to it, *i. e.,* by lending formal coöperation. This he may do negatively, by failing to prevent the other's sin, or by concealing or omitting to punish it if he is in duty bound to do so; or positively, by directly or indirectly seducing others, participating in, or at least consenting to, their evil actions, or glossing them over.

The different ways in which one may become accessory to the sins of others have been brought into hexameters as follows:

Iussio, consilium, consensus, palpo, recursus,
Participans, mutus, non obstans, non manifestans;

or:

Qui suadet, iubet, assentit, stimulat, mala laudat,
Qui silet, indulget, iuvat et defendere tentat.

As we know from the Catechism, a man may become accessory to the sins of others:

Serm., 98, n. 5–7 (XXXVIII, 593); *Serm.,* 128, n. 14 (*P. L.,* XXXVIII, 720).—St. Gregory the Great, *Moralia,* l. 4, c. 27, n. 52.

21 Cfr. Prov. XXIX, 24; Matth. XVIII, 6; Rom. I, 32; 1 Tim. V, 22; 2 John 10–11; Apoc. XVIII, 4.—St. Augustine, *De Morib. Eccl.,* II, c. 17, n. 57: *"Nihil interest, utrum ipse scelus admittas an propter te ab alio admitti velis."* (Migne, *P. L.,* XXXVI, 162).

a) By counsel (*consilium*), *i. e.,* by giving advice or urging motives, or by showing how an evil deed may be done, or the punishment due to it escaped.[22]

b) By command (*iussio*), *i. e.,* by inducing another to do an injury, especially if one is a superior.[23]

c) By consent (*consensus*), *i. e.,* by agreeing to sinful proposals or suggestions.[24] As Father Slater points out, this sin is committed by members of legislative bodies when they agree together to pass an unjust law, and also by jurymen who concur in a wrong verdict.[25]

d) By provocation (*irritatio*), *i. e.*, by employing anger or ridicule for the purpose of persuading another to commit an injustice or to omit to make reparation for an injury committed. This sin is also committed by those who dress indecently, exhibit obscene pictures, sell or loan bad books, carry on unchaste conversations, etc., thereby causing others to sin.[26]

e) By praise or flattery (*palpo*), *i. e.,* by commending the wicked conduct of others, instigating them to rebellion against lawful authority, eulogizing their crimes, etc.[27]

f) By silence (*reticentia*), *i. e.,* by omitting to dissuade others from sin or failing to censure their misdeeds, if one is in duty bound to do so; tolerating evil company or dangerous occasions, etc.[28]

g) By connivance (*conniventia*), *i. e.,* by neglecting to punish sinful conduct in children or subjects. Heli was punished "because he knew that his sons did wickedly, and did not chastise them."[29]

22 As when Caiphas advised the Jews to put Jesus to death. (John XI, 50).

23 Cfr. Ex. I, 15 sqq.; 2 Kings XI, 14; Matth. II, 16.

24 Cfr. Gen. XXXIX, 10; Acts VII, 57; XXII, 20; Eph. V, 6 sq.

25 *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. I, pp. 420 sq.

26 Cfr. Gen. III, 1–6.

27 Cfr. Ez. XIII, 18; Rom. I, 32.

28 Cfr. Lev. V, 1; Is. LVI, 10; Prov. XXIX, 25.

29 Cfr. 1 Kings III, 13; II, 23 sqq.

h) By sharing in unjustly acquired goods (*participatio, recursus*), *i. e.,* by knowingly buying them, accepting, receiving or selling them for the thief or robber, affording protection to wrong-doers, permitting one's property to be used for sinful purposes, assisting in forbidden commerce by carrying letters and messages, making or furnishing articles designed to destroy human life, etc.[80]

i) By defense of the evil done (*prava defensio*), *i. e.,* by excusing the evil conduct of others by word of mouth or in writing (novels, poems, plays), representing vice as mere weakness, etc.[81]

The gravity of these sins depends upon the degree of coöperation furnished. Positive is always more culpable than negative coöperation. Among the various forms of positive coöperation the most reprehensible are those which exercise the greatest influence upon the conduct of others. Thus, to command a sinful act is a greater sin than merely to counsel it, and to counsel it is a greater sin than merely to consent to its commission.

6. Genetic Division.—Sins may also be divided with respect to the various stages of malice through which they pass from their first beginning to the moment of consummation. There are three such stages.

a) The first is represented by what are commonly known as the seven so-called capital sins, in which all others have their wellspring and root. Every sin is essentially an inordinate desire manifested in a "lusting of the flesh against the

80 Cfr. Matth. XXVIII, 12; Luke XXII, 3 sqq.
81 Cfr. Luke XI, 47 sqq.

spirit"[32] through concupiscence of the eyes, concupiscence of the flesh, or pride of life, according to each man's character or social position.[33] Concupiscence of the flesh reveals itself as gluttony and unchastity; concupiscence of the eyes, as avarice and envy; pride of life, as conceit and anger. To these palmary forms of inordinate desire must be added sloth, *i. e.*, that lack of moral energy which enters into every sin and sometimes assumes the character of moral indifference. Actual sins, explains St. Bonaventure, have one beginning, a twofold root, a threefold stimulus, and a sevenfold source. The beginning is pride; the two roots are false respect and misdirected desire; the threefold stimulus is concupiscence in its three distinct forms; the seven sources are pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice, intemperance, and unchastity, of which the first five are spiritual and the last two carnal sins.[34]

b) The second stage is characterized by the sins of which Sacred Scripture says that they cry

[32] Rom. VII, 14–23; Gal. V, 17; 1 Pet. II, 11.

[33] Cfr. 1 John II, 16; Matth. IV, 1–10.

[34] *Brevil.*, P. III, c. 9: *"Circa ortum peccatorum capitalium hoc est in summa tenendum, videlicet, quod peccatum unum, inquam, est initium, duplex radix, triplex fomentum, septiforme caput sive capitale peccatum. Unum, inquam, est initium, scilicet superbia, iuxta quod dicit Scriptura: 'Initium omnis peccati superbia' (Eccles. X, 15). Duplex radix, scilicet timor male humilians et amor male accendens. Triplex fomentum secundum tria, quae sunt in mundo, scilicet 'concupiscentia carnis, concupiscentia oculorum et superbia vitae' (1 Ioa. ii, 16). Septiforme vero caput, scilicet superbia, invidia, ira, acedia, avaritia,*

to heaven for vengeance. They mark the height of viciousness and are absolutely opposed to man's rational nature.

c) The third stage consists in that wilful malice and impenitence which is known as the sin against the Holy Ghost.

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 1a 2ae, qu. 72, art. 1–7.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. I, pp. 149 sqq.; 418 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 320 sqq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.,* Vol. II, pp. 276 sqq., 282 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.,* Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 199 sqq.

gula et luxuria. Inter quae quinque praecedentia sunt peccata spiritualia, duo vero ultima sunt carnalia." (*Opera,* ed. 2a, Vicetia, p. 225).—Cfr. Hugh of St. Victor, *De Fructibus Carnis et Spiritus,* c. 3–10 (Migne, *P. L.*, CLXXVI, 999); St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* 1a 2ae, qu. 84, art. 4.

SECTION 2

THE SEVEN CAPITAL SINS

The so-called capital sins (*peccata capitalia*) must not be conceived as transient acts. They are rather the fundamental vices from which all sins flow, or the bad habits that manifest themselves in actual sins.[1] Hence the capital sins are neither by nature nor in their concrete manifestation always mortal, and it is a mistake to call them "deadly." The specific character and gravity of each may be determined by the presence or absence of certain marks or characteristics.

The capital sins are usually enumerated in the following order: Pride, covetousness, lust, envy,

1 Cfr. Hugh of St. Victor, *Summa Sent.*, tr. 3, c. 16: *"De istis quasi septem fontibus omnes animarum corruptiones emanant. Nec dicuntur haec capitalia, quod maiora sint aliis, quum alia aeque magna sint vel maiora, sed capitalia a quibus oriuntur omnia alia. Nullum enim est, quod ab aliquo horum non est exortum."* (Migne, *P. L.*, CLXXVI, 113).— St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, q. 84, art. 3: *"Dicitur peccatum capitale, prout metaphorice significat principium vel directivum aliorum. Et sic dicitur vitium capitale, ex quo alia vitia oriuntur et praecipue secundum originem causae finalis, quae est formalis origo, et ideo vitium capitale non solum est principium aliorum, sed etiam est directivum et quodammodo ductivum aliorum. Semper enim ars vel habitus, ad quem pertinet finis, principatur et imperat circa ea quae sunt ad finem. Unde S. Gregorius huiusmodi vitia capitalia ducibus exercituum comparat."* (*Moral.*, l. 31, c. 45, n. 87–88; Migne, *P. L.*, LXXVI, 620 sq.).

gluttony, anger, and sloth. From the initials of the Latin words *superbia, avaritia, luxuria, invidia, gula, ira, acedia,* the Schoolmen formed the catch-word *saligia* as an aid to the memory.

This septenary number, which may be traced back to St. Gregory the Great, became established at the time of Peter Lombard. Previously, theologians were wont to count eight or even nine capital sins.[2]

I. PRIDE.—Pride (*superbia, cenodoxia*) is inordinate self-esteem or love of one's own preeminence, coupled with a desire of inducing others to accept the exaggerated opinion one has formed of oneself. This vice manifests itself in as many different ways as there are objects which man is able to claim as real or supposed excellences or prerogatives.[3]

Pride may take the form of vanity, presumption, ambition, or arrogance.

1. VANITY.—Vanity is pride inspired by an overweening conceit in one's personal appearance, attainments or characteristics, especially when coupled with an excessive desire for notice or approval. This vice makes a man

[2] Cfr. Greg. M., *Moral.*, XXXI, c. 45; O. Zöckler, *Evagrius Ponticus*, Munich 1893, p. 104.

[3] Cfr. Luke XVIII, 9–14.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 93, n. 15: "*Quis est superbus? Qui non confessione peccatorum agit poenitentiam, ut sanari per humilitatem possit. Quis est superbus? Qui illa ipsa pauca, quae videtur habere bona, sibi vult arrogare et derogat misericordiae Dei. Quis est superbus? Qui etiamsi Deo tribuat bona, quae facit, insultat tamen eis, qui illa non faciunt, et extollit se super illos.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1203).—Cfr. S. Haidacher, *Des hl. Johannes Chrysostomus Büchlein über die Hoffart*, pp. 34 sqq.

foolish in the eyes of his fellowmen, injures the moral character, favors sensuality and extravagance, and often entails poverty and want. Intentional neglect of one's personal appearance or of the rules of taste and good breeding may also be put down as a kind of vanity.

2. PRESUMPTION.—Presumption is an exaggerated notion of one's intellectual or moral excellence, talents, virtues, etc., attended by the wish to undertake things that are above one's capacity. Intellectual presumption renders a man ridiculous, while moral presumption is destructive of religion and morality and often entails hypocrisy.[4]

3. AMBITION.—Inordinate ambition (*prava ambitio*) is an unreasonable striving after dignities, honors, or power. Ambition is commonly only a venial sin, but becomes mortal when it employs grievously sinful means and disregards the distinction between true and false honor.[5]

There is a just ambition which moves a man to desire dignities and honors with moderation for the purpose of being able to accomplish more for the glory of God and the welfare of his fellowmen. "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work," says St. Paul.[6]

4. ARROGANCE (*superbia completa sive perfecta*) is that haughtiness and proud contempt of others which leads a man to despise and transgress human and divine laws.

4 Cfr. Matth. VI, 1–6; VII, 1–5; Luke XVIII, 10–14; 1 Tim. VI, 4. —St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 148 (*al.* 14), n. 20: "*Aliud est virtutem habere, aliud virtutis similitudinem; aliud est rerum umbram sequi, aliud veritatem. Multo deformior illa est superbia, quae sub quibusdam humilitatis signis latet. Nescio enim, quomodo turpiora sunt vitia, quae virtutum specie celantur.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXII, 1214).

5 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 131 sq.

6 1 Tim. III, 1.—Cfr. C. Gennari, *Consultazioni Morali-Canoniche*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., Rome 1902, p. 638.—Homer, *Iliad*, VI, 208.—It is not honors and titles as such that are forbidden, but the inordinate desire for them.

This vice frequently accompanies wealth, high social position, noble birth, etc., and sometimes develops into tyranny, nay rebellion against God and self-deification.[7]

Arrogance often leads to boastfulness, which is the habit of bragging inordinately about one's own good qualities or talents, nay, even defects or sins, and to hypocrisy, *i. e.,* feigning virtues that one does not possess.

Pride "is so serious an evil because it strikes at the root of the primary obligations of reverent obedience towards our Lord God and love of our neighbor, because it is opposed to the truth, and because of its universality; it is in the heart of every man and quickly grows to fearful dimensions unless corrected or subdued." [8]

That there is a legitimate pride appears from 1 Cor. XV, 10: "By the grace of God I am what I am, and the grace he gave me hath not been fruitless; nay, I have labored more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." [9] Still the Apostle warns against "being more wise than it behooveth," [10] and "being wise in your own conceits." [11]

Opposed to pride is the virtue of *humility,*

7 Cfr. Gen. III, 5; Is. XIV, 14; Judges VII, 2; IX, 38; 1 Macc. VII, 34; 2 Macc. V, 21; Matth. IV, 9.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* 2a 2ae, qu. 162; Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* VI, 193, sqq.; Horace, *Satyrae,* I, 6, 5, 10, 64; Idem, *Epod.,* IV, 5 sq.

8 Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. I, p. 155.

9 *χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμὶ ὅ εἰμι, καὶ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἡ εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κενὴ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα, οὐκ ἐγὼ δέ, ἀλλὰ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σὺν ἐμοί.*

10 Rom. XII, 3, 16.

11 1 Tim. VI, 17.—Cfr. Homer, *Iliad,* I, 244; *Odyssey,* IX, 20; Horace, *Carmina,* IV, 2, 40: "*Sapere aude,*" *i. e.,* boldly strive for wisdom.

which keeps a man in his proper place both with respect to God and his fellowmen. Humility is highly recommended by our Divine Lord as the fundamental virtue of the Christian life, and He has set Himself up as a model thereof. Matth. XI, 29: "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart." [12]

II. Covetousness.—Covetousness or avarice (*avaritia, philargyria*) is an inordinate love of earthly things, an immoderate desire to possess, keep, and increase them (*tenacitas*). With regard to no other sin is it so difficult to draw a line of demarcation between what is licit and what is forbidden as with regard to avarice, which loves to hide under the cloak of duty, frugality, and other virtues. It is sinful to attach one's heart to earthly goods, to serve Mammon instead of God,[13] to be niggardly toward one's fellowmen and unscrupulous in the choice of means to sat-

12 Cfr. Ecclus. X, 15; Matth. V, 3; XVIII, 3; Luke XIV, 1; John V, 14; James IV, 6.—St. Bernard, *Tract. de Gradibus Humilit. et Superbiae*, IV, n. 14 sq.: "*Trabes in oculo grandis et grossa* (*Mt.* vii, 5) *superbia in mente est, quae quadam corpulentiâ sui vanâ, non sanâ, tumidâ, non solidâ, oculum mentis obscurat, veritatem obumbrat, ita ut, si tuam occupaverit mentem, iam tu te videre, iam te talem, qualis es vel qualis esse potes, non possis sentire, sed qualem te amas, talem te vel putes esse vel speres fore. Quid enim aliud est superbia, quam amor propriae excellentiae? . . . Qui ergo plene veritatem in se cognoscere curat, necesse est ut semotâ trabe superbiae, quae oculum arcet a luce, ascensiones in corde suo disponat, per quas seipsum in se ipso inquirat, et sic . . . primum veritatis gradum pertingat.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, CLXXXII, 949).

13 Cfr. Matth. VI, 21, 24; Eph. V, 5; Col. III, 5.—Cfr. St. Polycarp, *Epist. ad Philipp.*, c. 11: Ἐὰν τις μὴ ἀπέχηται τῆς φιλαργυρίας, ὑπὸ εἰδωλολατρείας μιανθήσεται καὶ ὡσπερεὶ ἐν τοῖ ἔθνεσιν λογισθήσεται, οἵτινες ἀγνοοῦσιν κρίσιν

isfy one's greed. Avarice leads to mendacity, deceit, perjury, treason, theft, and every other kind of injustice.[14] St. Paul no doubt had these consequences in mind when he censured avarice as "the root of all evils." [15]

Among the consequences of covetousness are insatiability, discontent, fear of persecution and poverty,[16] and that "infatuation of self-love," as Blair calls it, which so often ends in impenitence.[17]

Ordinary sins of covetousness are in themselves venial, but become mortal if they lead to the transgression of precepts that bind under pain of grievous sin. Al-

κυρίου. (Ed. 2a, F. X. Funk, p. 308).

14 Cfr. Gen. XXXI, 7; Ecclus. XXXI, 5–7; Is. V, 8; Jer. XXII, 17; Am. VIII, 5–6; John XII, 4–6.

15 1 Tim. VI, 10.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 84, art. 1.—Sophocles, *Antigone*, 221 sq.

16 Cfr. Matth. XIII, 22.—Ps.-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 293 (*al.* 250 *de Temp.*), n. 1: "*Contemnenda est, inquam, avaritia, quae velut ignis, quanto magis acceperit, tanto amplius quaerit.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIX, 2301).—Horace, *Carm.*, III, 16, 17: "*Crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam.*"—IDEM, *Satyrae*, I, 1, 28 sqq.—Juvenal, *Satyrae*, XIV, 28–29.—When these pages were being prepared for the printer, the *Fortnightly Review* (St. Louis, Mo., Vol. XXIV, No. 9) published the following: "Mrs. Hetty Green, who died not long ago, leaving an estate of about $100,000,000, according to testimony filed in a surrogate's court by her son, lived under at least six assumed names, and probably many others, hoping thus to elude schemers who might be seeking her money, and murderous cranks, such as the one who tried to kill her friend Russell Sage. She never owned in New York so much as a three-legged stool in the way of furnishings for what men call a home, and moved from one $10 to $15 boarding-house to another, in constant fear that her fellow-boarders would learn her identity. This immensely wealthy woman, who possessed the means to gratify her every whim, lived almost like a criminal dreading arrest. She dreaded to lose the very wealth which oppressed her, and the world's richest woman was perhaps more familiar with the fear of poverty than many a penniless clerk on the pay-roll of her estate. . . . If she had labored to reduce her own fortune by wise and unselfish giving, her journey might have been more cheerful, for thus she might have escaped the limitations of poverty and at the same time divested herself of the heaviest burdens of wealth."

17 Cfr. Luke XII, 15–21; 1 Tim. VI, 9.

though covetousness is in itself but a venial sin, "yet it is very dangerous because of man's proneness to it, and because the vice is apt to grow fast by what it feeds upon, until it becomes mortally sinful. Holy Scripture frequently condemns it and warns us against it." [18]

III. Lust.—Lust (*luxuria*) [19] is an inordinate desire for the pleasure which has its seat in the organs of generation. Sins of lust may be internal (thoughts and desires) or external (words and acts). In these sins there is no smallness of matter (*parvitas materiae*), but every act of wrongful indulgence in venereal pleasure, if directly sought or consented to, is grievously sinful. No sin against chastity is venial except that which remains internally incomplete (*actus imperfectus*), not on account of outward circumstances, but because the will resists.

Not all sins against the Sixth and Ninth Commandments, therefore, are mortal. If an impure thought, word, or act is freely willed, or, *a fortiori*, if it is deliberately excited, it is a mortal sin. Not so if it arises in the mind against one's will or without one's deliberate consent. External acts, such as immodest touches, looks, etc., are mortally sinful if due to lust; they are venially sinful if due to curiosity or inadvertence, and transient

18 Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 157 sq. —Cfr. 1 Tim. VI, 9, etc.

19 Cfr. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 2a 2ae, qu. 153 sq.: St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Moralis*, l. III, n. 412 sqq. (ed. Gaudé, Vol. I, pp. 665 sqq.).

in character; and they are not sinful at all if performed for some reasonable cause, even though accompanied by venereal pleasure, provided, of course, no consent is given to such pleasure.

1. Some sins of lust or impurity are according to the order of nature, others are against nature.

a) Sins according to the order of nature (*in ordine naturae*) are all acts of sexual intercourse committed by unmarried persons, *e. g.*, fornication, concubinage, etc.

b) Sins against the order of nature (*contra ordinem naturae*) are those which frustrate the divinely ordained purpose of sexual intercourse, *e. g.*, onanism, self-pollution, pederasty, sodomy, etc.[20]

Certain sins of impurity derive additional gravity from the attending circumstances, *e. g.*, double adultery, incest, fornication committed by persons vowed to celibacy,[21] seduction practiced by persons in authority upon their subjects, etc.

2. Lust or impurity is a sin which ought "not so much as be named" among Christians.[22] It involves most serious consequences for the individual as well as for society.

a) "Know you not," says St. Paul, "that your

20 Cfr. Gen. XIX, 5–7; XXXVIII, 9; Ex. XXII, 19; Lev. XVIII, 22 sq.; XX, 13, 15 sq.; Judg. XIX, 22 sqq.; Wisd. XIV, 26; Rom. I, 26 sq.; 1 Cor. V, 1; VI, 9 sq.; 1 Tim. I, 9 sq.

21 Cfr. Gen. XIX, 31 sqq.; XXVIII, 13 sqq.; 2 Kings XLI, 4; XIII, 11 sqq.—Cfr. 1 Cor. VI, 15, 19; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 154, art. 6–10.

22 1 Cor. V, 1; Eph. V, 3.

bodies are members of Christ? Am I then to take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid! Or know you not that he that cleaveth to a harlot is one body [with her]? 'The two,' it is said, 'shall become one flesh.' But he that cleaveth to the Lord is one spirit [with him]. Flee from impurity. Every [other] sin that a man committeth is [a thing] outside the body; but the impure sinneth against his own body. Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is within you, whom you have from God? And you are not your own, for you have been bought at a price. Glorify God, then, in your body."[23] With every other sin (avarice, pride, anger, gluttony, etc.) either the object, or the means of its attainment, lie outside of the subject, whereas in the case of impurity the sinner makes his own body the direct means of wrong-doing (*materia peccandi*). This vice is especially offensive in a Christian whose body has been raised to the supernatural order by Baptism. God has not only redeemed us from the servitude of the devil and ransomed us at a tremendous price (the life of His only begotten Son), but He has made us temples of the Holy Ghost and members of the mystical body of Christ. For this reason impurity in a Christian involves a kind of sacrilege, a dese-

[23] 1 Cor. VI, 15 sqq. (Westminster Version).

cration of the temple of God and a violation of the property rights of Jesus Christ.[24]

These considerations will explain why of all the capital sins impurity is most injurious to the body and the moral character.

b) Impurity not only causes concupiscence to grow stronger,[25] but leads to self-deception, inconstancy in the keeping of good resolutions, indifference toward considerations of honor and property, intemperance in eating and drinking, disgust for spiritual things, dread of eternity, hatred of God, unbelief, and suicide.[26] The effects of this vice on the bodily and spiritual health of its victims and the welfare of their descendants are incalculable. "Sexual intercourse outside of

24 Rom. III, 23–25; 1 Cor. III, 16; VI, 13; Eph. V, 30; 1 Thess. IV, 7 sq.; 1 Pet. I, 18 sq.

25 Cfr. St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 123 (*al.* 11), n. 14: *"Libido transacta semper sui relinquit poenitudinem; nunquam satiatur et extincta reaccenditur. Usu crescit et deficit; nec rationi paret, quae impetu ducitur."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXII, 1055).

26 Os. IV, 11; 2 Kings XI, 4 sqq.; XIII, 11 sqq.; Prov. V, 1 sqq.; XXIX, 3; Ecclus. XIX, 2 sq.; Luke XV, 13, 30.—St. Ambrose, *Epist.*, 27, n. 2: *"Opus virtutis detestatur luxuriosus, heluo refugit. Aegyptium itaque corpus, quod illecebras diligit, adversatur animae virtutes, abominatur imperium, refugit virtutum disciplinas et omnia opera, quae huiusmodi sunt."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XVI, 1047).—Idem, *Epist.*, 58, n. 16: *"Ubi coeperit quis luxuriari, incipit deviare a fide vera. Ita duo committit maxima crimina, opprobria carnis et mentis sacrilegia."* (*P. L.*, XVI, 1182).—St. Bernard, *In Cant.*, s. 39, n. 7: *"Luxuriae currus quadriga nihilominus volvitur, ingluvie videlicet ventris, libidine coitus, mollitie vestium, otii soporisque resolutione. Trahitur equis aeque duobus, prosperitate vitae et rerum abundantiâ, et quis his praesident duo, ignaviae torpor et infida securitas."* (*P. L.*, CLXXXIII, 980).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 153, art. 5: *"Per vitium luxuriae maxime appetitus inferior, scilicet concupiscibilis, vehementer intendit suo obiecto, scilicet delectabili, propter vehementiam passionis et delectationis. Et ideo consequens est, quod per luxuriam maxime superiores vires deordinentur, scilicet ratio et voluntas."*—J. Gerson, *De Examinatione Doctr.*, P. I, consid. 6 (*Opera*, I,

marriage," says a modern penologist, "is the cardinal crime from which, directly or indirectly, most other crimes spring." [27] There is an intimate connection between lust and cruelty, especially rape and murder.[28]

"It is vanity to follow the lusts of the flesh and to desire that for which thou must afterwards be grievously punished. . . . For they who follow sensuality, defile their conscience and lose the grace of God," says Thomas à Kempis.[29]

IV. Envy.—Envy (*invidia*) is defined as sadness on account of another's good (*tristitia de alienis bonis*). To be sad because an unworthy man has obtained a post of honor or wealth, of which he is sure to make wrong use, or to which we ourselves have a better claim, or which will be employed to our disadvantage, is not envy. Such sadness generally results from shortsightedness or a mistaken idea of Providence; but it does not exclude charity; in fact there is a species

18): *"Sicut nulla affectio est vehementior quam luxuriosa libido, sic ad errandum falsumque docendum nulla perniciosior."*

27 Beneke, *Gefängnisstudien*, p. 54.—Horace says (*Carm.*, III, 6, 17 sqq.):

"Fecunda culpae saecula nuptias
Primum inquinavere et genus et
domos:
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit."

Cfr. the same writer's *Satyrae*, Book III, 3, 107 sq.:

"Nam fuit ante Helenam cunnus deterrima belli causa. . . ."

28 Cfr. Ez. XVI, 49; Am. II, 7.—Jos. Müller, *Die Keuschheitsideen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und praktischen Bedeutung*, Mayence 1897, pp. 152 sqq.

29 Thomas à Kempis, *De Imit. Christi*, I, 1: *"Vanitas est carnis desideria sequi: et illud desiderare unde postmodum graviter oportet puniri. . . . Nam sequentes suam sensualitatem maculant conscientiam: et perdunt Dei gratiam."* (Ed. Pohl, Vol. II, p. 659.)

of sadness which is extolled as a virtue. Cfr. Ps. CXVIII, 136: "My eyes have sent forth springs of water, because they have not kept thy law." Matth. V, 5: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." 2 Cor. VII, 9 sq.: "Now I am glad, not because you were made sorrowful; but because you were made sorrowful unto penance. For you were made sorrowful according to God. . . ."[30] Sadness combined with selfishness, however, is always sinful because incompatible with, nay directly opposed to, charity. The envious man seeks to injure his neighbor rather than advantage himself, whereas charity inclines us to rejoice in the wellbeing of others. Through the envy of the devil sin and death came into this world.[31] Envy inspired the first recorded murder and the crucifixion of Christ.[32] It is the lowest form of selfishness because it aims solely at destruction. This vice is mortally sinful in itself, but admits of a *parvitas materiae*.

Envy engenders hatred, revenge, malignant joy at the misfortunes of others, calumny, slander, and crimes against life and property.[33] More than any other vice envy entails its own punishment, for it destroys peace of mind and sometimes even injures the body.[34] Sacred

30 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 254 (*al.* 151 *de. Temp.*), n. 2; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 36, art. 1–4.

31 Cfr. Gen. III, 1; IV, 5; Wisd. II, 24.

32 Cfr. Matth. XXVII, 18; 1 Cor. X, 24; XIII, 4 sqq.; Gal. V, 26.

33 Matth. XXVII, 18–25; cfr. Gen. IV, 8; XXVI, 14 sq.; XXVII, 41; XXXVII, 4, 11.

34 Matth. XXVII, 18–25. Cfr. Gen. IV, 5–6; XXXI, 2–5.

Scripture graphically compares this vice to "rottenness of the bones" [85] and intimates that it consumes its victim body and soul.[86]

V. GLUTTONY.—Gluttony (*gula*) is an inordinate desire for earthly goods in general and food and drink in particular.[87] Man is expected to use food and drink according to right reason. Inordinate use of these things (as if they were an end in themselves), degrades him to the level of the brute. Besides this grosser form of gluttony (*voracitas, ingluvies, ebrietas*), there is a more refined though equally sinful variety, which consists in craving for food and drink solely for the pleasure they give and making them the principal object of one's thoughts and desires (*cupedia*). This epicurean *gourmandise* (sybaritism), like the grosser forms of gluttony, confuses the end with the means. Saint Paul says of those addicted to it that their "God is their belly." [88]

A very common form of gluttony is drunkenness (*ebrietas*). Complete drunkenness (*ebrietas perfecta*) temporarily deprives man of the use of his highest prerogatives—reason and free-will. Voluntarily to put one-

[85] Prov. XIV, 30.

[86] Wisd. VI, 25.

[87] Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 148, art. 1: "*Gula non nominat quemlibet appetitum edendi et bibendi, sed inordinatum. Dicitur autem appetitus inordinatus ex eo, quod recedit ab ordine rationis, in quo bonum virtutis moralis consistit. Ex hoc autem dicitur aliquid esse peccatum, quod virtuti contrariatur. Unde manifestum est, quod gula est peccatum.*"

[88] Phil. III, 19; cfr. Rom. XVI, 18.

self into this condition is, as a rule, mortally sinful. Sins committed in the state of drunkenness are morally imputable (*voluntarium in causa*) unless indeed one could truthfully claim, like Noë, that he knew not the strength of wine. To drink to excess, but not so as to lose the use of reason, is *per se* a venial sin, but may become mortally sinful *per accidens, e. g.*, on account of serious harm to one's health, grave scandal, neglect of important duties, or when a man knows that excessive drinking is for him a proximate occasion of grievous sin.

The sinful character of intemperance in all its forms is evident from the consequences to which this vice leads. It involves a senseless destruction of food and drink, of which others may stand in need, and injures both body and soul by exciting the animal appetites, especially lust, blunting the moral judgment, warping the finer sensibilities, and ultimately destroying all interest in spiritual things.[89]

89 Cfr. Gen. XXV, 29–34; Is. V, 11, 22; Am. VI, 6; Prov. XX, 1; XXIII, 29–35; Eph. V, 18.—St. Augustine, *Confessiones*, X, c. 31, n. 44: "*Quum salus sit causa edendi et bibendi, adiungit se tamquam pedissequa periculosa iucunditas et plerumque praeire conatur, ut eius causa fiat, quod salutis causa me facere vel dico vel volo. Nec idem modus utriusque est, nam quod saluti satis est, delectationi parum est.*"—*Ibid.*, n. 47: "*In his ergo tentationibus positus certo quotidie adversus concupiscentiam manducandi et bibendi; non enim est, quod semel praecidere et ulterius non attingere decernam. Itaque freni gutturis temperata relaxatione et constrictione tenendi sunt. Et quis est, Domine, qui non rapiatur aliquantulum extra metas necessitatis? Quisquis est, magnus est; magnificet nomen tuum. Ego autem non sum, quia peccator homo sum.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, 798, 799).—Cfr. Ps.-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 294 (*al.* 231 *de Temp.*), n. 2–3 (*P. L.*, XXXII, 2304).—St. Bernard, *Epist.*, II, n. 10: "*Quomodo potest esurire vel sitire Christum plenus quotidie siliquis porcorum? Non potes bibere simul calicem Christi et calicem daemoniorum (1 Cor. X, 20). Calix daemoniorum superbia est, calix daemoniorum detractio et invidia est, calix daemoniorum crapula et ebrietas est; quae quum impleverint vel mentem vel ventrem tuum, Christus in te non invenit locum.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, CLXXXII, 85).—Terence, *Eunuch.*, IV, 5, 6: "*Sine Cerere et Libero* [*Baccho*] *friget Venus.*"—Ovid, *Rem. Am.*,

Drunkenness as a habit (*ebriositas*) is deserving of the severest censure, because it involves waste, destroys family life, creates dissensions, causes crimes and diseases, and entails the physical and moral ruin of individuals, and sometimes of entire nations. "Drunkenness," says Origen, "seduced him whom Sodom had not seduced."[40] Hence the Apostle's admonition: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury; but be ye filled with the holy Spirit."[41]

VI. ANGER.—Anger (*ira, iracundia*), broadly speaking, is a craving for vengeance. It is not necessarily sinful, because, to quote St. Thomas, "vengeance may be sought either well or ill."[42]

a) There is a righteous anger which inveighs against evil and in favor of goodness. Holy Scripture frequently attributes such anger to God. John the Baptist angrily denounced the Pharisees and Sadducees as a "brood of vipers," who "flee from the wrath to come."[43] "With anger" (μετ' ὀργῆς) and grief "for the blindness of their hearts,"[44] Christ pronounced woe upon the Pharisees,[45] drove the money changers from the temple and overthrew their tables.[46] Filled

805 sqq.—Seneca, *Epist.*, 95, 23: "*Innumerabiles esse morbos non miraberis: coquos numera.*"

40 Cfr. Gen. XIX, 32 sqq.; Prov. XXXI, 4.—Homer, *Odyssey*, IX, 360 sqq; *Iliad*, VI, 258 sqq.—Horace, *Carm.*, III, 21, 9 sqq.—A. Egger, *Der Klerus und die Alkoholfrage*, 4th ed., Freiburg 1909.—Jos. Keating, S.J., *The Drink Question*, London 1914.—Austin O'Malley, *The Cure of Alcoholism*, St. Louis 1913.

41 Eph. V, 18; cfr. Luke XXI, 34; 1 Pet. V, 8.

42 *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 158, art. 1–7.

43 Matth. III, 7.

44 Mark III, 5.

45 Matth. XXXIII, 13 sqq.

46 Matth. XXI, 12.

with righteous indignation St. Peter invoked the judgment of God upon Ananias and Saphira,[47] St. Stephen rebuked the Jews for resisting the Holy Ghost,[48] and St. Paul upbraided the Athenians.[49] Righteous anger is no sin, and parents and superiors are justified in reprehending and punishing their children or subjects for a just cause. "If one is angry according to right reason," says the Angelic Doctor, "then to get angry is praiseworthy." [50]

b) To be angry, even for a just cause, becomes sinful when a man loses control of himself and indulges in feelings of hatred or enmity. This is true *a fortiori* when anger lacks a just cause. Note, however, that as long as anger remains internal, it is as a rule not sinful, but merely a temptation. Only when it vents itself in oaths or blasphemies, or leads to acts of violence and destruction, is it more or less grievously sinful.

Man is bound under pain of mortal sin to keep the mighty passion of anger under control. "Be angry and sin not," says St. Paul, "let not the sun go down upon your anger; give not place to the devil." [51] The meaning obviously is that man should not permit his anger to ex-

47 Acts V, 3 sqq.

48 Acts VII, 51 sqq.

49 Acts XVII, 16 sqq.

50 *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 158, art. 1: *"Si aliquis irascitur secundum rationem rectam, tunc irasci est laudabile."*—Cfr. Saint Augustine, *Tract. in Epist. Ioa.*, VII, n. 11: *"Amor saevit, caritas saevit; saevit quodammodo sine felle, more columbino, non corvino."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXV, 1235).

51 Eph. IV, 26 sq.

ceed the bounds of reason, nor nurse grievances.[52] St. James says: "Let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to anger; for the anger of man worketh not the justice of God." [53]

VII. SLOTH.—Sloth (*acedia*) is frequently caused by an abnormal condition of the body. It may be defined as a sluggishness of the soul that makes it dread physical and mental labor in the exercise of virtue. Sloth, as a vice, may be accompanied by great energy of mind and body in matters not pertaining to the spiritual domain. Sloth usually begins with lukewarmness, especially neglect of prayer and religious exercises. It manifests itself:

(1) As indifference to virtue and spiritual things (*desidia, inertia*), accompanied by distraction and neglect of duty and by pleasure in sentimentalities and day-dreaming. The ordinary symptoms of this form of sloth are: mental unrest, frequent change of work or profession, shiftlessness, inconstancy, etc.

(2) As disgust (*taedium*) for the moral and religious duties which every man is bound to perform. This disgust may develop into positive aversion for Catholic principles and practices and

52 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 25, s. 2, n. 3 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVI, 189): "*Etsi ex ipsa humana conditione et infirmitate mortalitatis, quam portamus, subrepit ira christiano, non debet diu teneri et fieri pridiana. Eiice illam* [*iram*] *de corde, antequam occidat lux ista visibilis, ne te deserat lux illa invisibilis.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVI, 189).

53 Jas. I, 19 sq.

regret of having been received into the Church. At this stage sloth is generally accompanied by loss of courage and results in spiritual and moral decay.

Sloth is a mortal sin whenever it leads to the neglect of duties to which one is obliged *sub gravi.* The dire consequences of religious indifference are adumbrated in the Apocalypse: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot! But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth." [54]

"Think not that one who falls deeply, strikes bottom at once. Do you wish to learn the cause? For a long time this man was very lukewarm, and as a consequence his soul lost strength unnoticed, while the evil inclinations grew stronger." [55]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* 1a, 2ae, qu. 84, art. 2 sq.—IDEM, *De Malo,* qu. 8 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. I, pp. 154 sqq.—O. Zöckler, *Das Lehrstück von den sieben Hauptsünden,* Munich 1893.—Ph. G. Laborie, *Les Péchés Capitaux,* Paris 1908.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.,* Vol. II, pp. 287 sqq.—Natalis Alexander, *De Peccatis* (Migne, *Theol. Curs.,* XI, 707-1168).—Paulhan, *Les Caractères,* Paris 1903.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 375 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.,* 22nd ed., pp. 129 sqq.

54 Apoc. III, 15 sqq.; cfr. Matth. XXV, 26 sqq.—St. Bernard, *De Consideratione,* II, c. 13: "*Fugienda est otiositas, mater nugarum, noverca virtutum.*" (Migne, *P. L.,* CLXXXII, 756).

55 John Cassian, *Collationes,* VI, 17.

SECTION 3

THE SINS THAT CRY TO HEAVEN FOR VENGEANCE

There are four sins that are said to cry to heaven for vengeance, *viz.:* (1) Wilful murder; (2) Sodomy; (3) Oppression of the poor; (4) Defrauding laborers of their hire.

The Schoolmen enumerate these sins in the following distich:

> *Clamitat ad caelum vox sanguinis et sodomorum,*
> *Vox oppressorum, merces detenta laborum.*

This classification is based upon Scripture. Gen. IV, 10: "The Lord said to Cain: . . . What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth." Gen. XVIII, 20 sq.: "The Lord said: The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is multiplied, and their sin is become exceedingly grievous." Gen. XIX, 13 the angels tell Lot that they will destroy Sodom, "because their cry is grown loud before the Lord, who hath sent us to destroy them." Ex. III, 7 Jehovah says to Moses: "I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry because of the rigor of them that are over the

works." According to Ex. XXII, 22 sq. the Mosaic law prescribed: "You shall not hurt a widow or an orphan," adding: "If you hurt them they will cry out to me, and I will hear their cry." Deut. XXIV, 14 sq.: "Thou shalt not refuse the hire of the needy and the poor . . .; but thou shalt pay him the price of his labor the same day, before the going down of the sun, because he is poor, and with it maintaineth his life: lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be reputed to thee for a sin." James V, 4: "Behold the hire of the laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth: and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."

If we study the nature of the sins thus characterized as crying to Heaven for vengeance, we find that they form a category separate and distinct from the capital sins. For whereas the latter spring from an inordinate craving of the natural appetites, and are sinful only when they involve a lack of rational self-control, the distinguishing note of the so-called *peccata clamantia* is violent suppression of certain natural instincts and conscious frustration of their ends and objects. In other words, besides a trangression of the moral order, they entail a violation of the laws of nature, thus provoking divine wrath in a special manner. This fact is well expressed

in the phrase, "sins that cry to Heaven for vengeance."

It goes without saying that every sin of this kind is by its very nature mortal because it involves the transgression of an important law with full advertence and knowledge.

The sins that cry to Heaven for vengeance violate or suppress (1) the instinct of self-preservation, which tends to conserve individual life; (2) the sexual instinct, which was instituted for the perpetuation of the race; and (3) the social instinct, which tends to the protection of private property.

a) MURDER is the unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought. This sin may be direct or indirect, it may be committed against oneself (suicide) or against another, even the unborn (*procuratio abortus,* malicious destruction of the embryo or fetus).[1] The term murder includes every species of unnatural cruelty, such as exposing a child to the danger of death, maltreating prisoners and slaves, engaging in piracy, waging war without sufficient reason, and killing another in the intellectual or moral sense, *i. e.,* robbing him of his good name by slander or calumny.

The unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought is a terrible crime because it interferes

[1] Cfr. *Codex Iuris Can.,* can. 2350, § 1.

with the sovereignty of God, who is the Master of life and death and has created man as His own image and property,[1] and because it undermines the foundation of society and brings upon its victim the greatest temporal misfortune and sometimes even causes his eternal damnation. Justly, therefore, is cold-blooded murder punished by death (capital punishment).

Murder is often committed for petty motives, such as revenge, jealousy, or avarice. The gravity of this crime may be judged by the fact that murderers often become their own accusers.

b) SODOMY is the sin for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God. The term includes all sins of unnatural lust, particularly those committed between persons of the same sex, and all practices aiming at the prevention of conception.[2] Sodomy is closely related to murder. Both crimes are directed against the preservation of the human race, and, moreover, cruelty and lust, heartlessness and debauchery, bloodthirst and unchastity (Sadism, Masochism) usually go hand in hand.[3]

Holy Scripture condemns the conduct of Onan, not

1 Gen. I, 26 sq.; IX, 6; Deut. XXXII, 39.

2 Cfr. Gen. XIX, 5; XXXVIII, 9; Lev. XVIII, 22; XX, 13; Judges XIX, 22 sqq.; Rom. I, 26 sq.; 1 Tim. I, 10.

3 Cfr. Ez. XVI, 49; Am. II, 7.—H. Rau, *Die Grausamkeit mit besonderer Bezugnahme auf sexuelle Faktoren,* Berlin 1903.—On Sadism (*crudelitas activa*) and Masochism (*crudelitas passiva*) cfr. Familler, *Pastoralpsychiatrie,* Freiburg 1898, pp. 157 sq.; Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis,* 13th ed., pp. 158 sqq.; A. Eulenburg, *Sadismus und Masochismus,* Wiesbaden 1902; O'Malley and Walsh, *Essays in Pastoral Medicine,* New York 1906, pp. 338 sq.—F. à Barbens, *Intr. Pathol. ad Stud. Theol. Mor.,* pp. 255 sqq.

only because he had a wicked intention, but "because he did a detestable thing." [4]

c) Oppression of the Poor, especially of widows and orphans, is a dastardly crime because it violates the natural law and runs counter to a sentiment deeply ingrained in the human heart. This crime is committed in various ways, by dishonestly administering an estate, by fraud in drawing up a man's last will, by unjust appropriation of that which belongs to the poor, by the employment of trickery in lawsuits, bribing judges and other officials, etc.[5]

d) To Defraud a Laborer of His Just Wage is a crime against the fundamental right of private property. It is the sin of oppression of the poor in an aggravated form, for it injures those who are compelled to make a living in the sweat of their brow. This sin is perhaps more often committed indirectly than directly, *e. g.*, by carelessly incurring bankruptcy, by reducing wages without necessity, by coöperating in the establishment of monopolies or trusts, by adulterating food or raising its price without ne-

[4] Gen. XXXVIII, 7 sqq.; 1 Paralip. II, 3.

[5] Is. X, 1-2; Matth. XXIII, 15; Mark XII, 40.—Cfr. St. Jerome, *In Ezech.*, V, c. 16: *"Dives ille in evangelio purpuratus (Luc. XVI, 19) nihil aliud refertur habuisse criminis nisi quod opibus et divitiis affluens in tantam eruperat superbiam, ut manum egeno et pauperi Lazaro non porrigeret, et sic oblitus sit conditionis suae, ut ne hoc quidem misero daret, quod proiiciendum erat."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXV, 154).

cessity ("profiteering"), by practicing usury,[6] by defrauding workingmen of their earnings, by compelling them to purchase their supplies at exorbitant prices in company stores (truck system), and in many other ways.

We shall have more to say of these sins in later volumes.

Readings.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 180 sqq.—J. A. Ryan, *A Minimum Wage*, New York 1906.—Idem, *Distributive Justice*, New York 1916.—Th. Slater, S.J., *Questions of Moral Theology*, New York 1915, pp. 78 sqq.; 176 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 391 sqq.

6 Cfr. C. Elliott, *Usury*, Millersburg, O., 1902.

SECTION 4

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

1. NAME.—Broadly speaking, every sin is a sin against the Holy Ghost, because every sin is opposed to sanctity, of which the Holy Ghost is the author. But the name "sin against the Holy Ghost" is specifically applied to a certain class of transgressions described in Holy Scripture. When the Pharisees attributed the miracles of Christ to the devil, Our Lord declared: "Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven; and whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come."[1] Here is a clear distinction between blasphemy against the Son of man, *i. e.*, Jesus Christ, and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. To be scandalized at the former in His lowly human appearance is pardonable,[2] but to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, who manifests Him-

1 Matth. IX, 34; XII, 24, 31 sq.; Mark III, 28–30; Luke XII, 10.

2 Matth. XI, 4; cfr. Matth. XXVI, 31.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 14, art. 1, ad 2: "*Peccatum in filium hominis erit peccatum ex ignorantia vel ex infirmitate.*"

self through the miracles of Christ, is a sign of malice and obstinacy and therefore unpardonable.

2. DEFINITION.—Hence there is a class of transgressions which may be embraced under the collective term, "sin against the Holy Ghost." They all involve a deliberate and obstinate opposition to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit as witnessed in the exercise of Christ's power over nature and the demons, and continued in the miracles of grace. He still works in the souls of the faithful. Consequently, the sin against the Holy Ghost consists in openly opposing divine Revelation and the operation of the Holy Spirit both in and outside of man, more particularly in deliberately despising or rejecting supernatural grace. And as the Holy Ghost operates in souls especially through the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, the sin against the Holy Ghost is opposed to these three virtues in particular. With this idea in mind, St. Augustine and Peter Lombard enumerated six distinct sins against the Holy Ghost, which may, however, be reduced to one, *i. e.*, deliberate apostasy or final impenitence (*impoenitentia finalis*).[8] The other five are

[8] Cfr. Is. XXII, 14.—St. Jerome, *In Is.*, VII, c. 22 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXIV, 272).—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 71 (*al.* 11 *De Verbis Domini*), c. 12, n. 20: "*Contra hoc donum gratuitum, contra istam Dei gratiam loquitur cor impoenitens. Ipsa ergo impoenitentia est Spiritus blasphemia, quae non remittetur neque in hoc saeculo neque in futuro. Contra Spiritum enim sanctum, quo baptizantur, quorum peccata omnia dimittuntur, et quem accepit Ecclesia, ut cui dimiserit peccata, dimittantur ei, verbum valde malum et nimis impium, sive cogitatione sive etiam*

merely preliminary acts of impenitence, which may be forgiven, whereas final impenitence is by its very nature unpardonable (*peccatum irremissibile*),[4] not because it is beyond the reach of divine mercy, or on account of its objective enormity, but because the impenitent man deliberately rejects grace. He who sins against the Holy Ghost cannot obtain forgiveness for the simple reason that he refuses to be forgiven.[5]

linguâ suâ dicit, quem patientia Dei, quum ad poenitentiam adducat, ipse secundum duritiam cordis sui et cor impoenitens thesaurizat sibi iram in die irae, et revelationis iusti iudicii Dei, qui reddet unicuique secundum opera eius (Rom. ii, 4–6). Haec ergo impoenitentia, sic enim uno aliquo nomine possumus utcunque appellare et blasphemiam et verbum contra Spiritum sanctum, quod remissionem non habet in aeternum." (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 455).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 14, art. 1.

4 Cfr. Matth. XII, 31 sq.; 1 John V, 16; Heb. VI, 4–6; X, 26; 2 Pet. II, 20.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelect. Dogmat.*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., p. 586.

5 Cfr. John VIII, 21, 24; Rom. II, 4–8.—St. Augustine, *De Serm. Dom. in Monte*, I, c. 22, n. 74: "*Ista differentia peccatorum Iudam tradentem a Petro negante distinguit, non quia poenitenti non sit ignoscendum, . . . sed quia illius peccati tanta labes est, ut deprecandi humilitatem subire non possit, etiamsi peccatum suum malâ conscientiâ et agnoscere et enuntiare cogatur.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, 1266).—St. Bonaventure, *Brevil.*, P. III, c. 11: "*Quia directe impugnat gratiam Spiritus Sancti, per quam fit remissio peccati, ideo dicitur irremissibile, non quia nullo modo possit remitti, sed quia quantum est de se, directe est impugnativum medicamenti et remedii, per quod fieri habet remissio peccati.*" (Ed. 2a, Vicetia, 233).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 14, art. 3: "*Secundum diversas acceptiones peccati in Spiritum Sanctum diversimode irremissibile dicitur. Si enim dicatur peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum finalis impoenitentia, sic dicitur irremissibile, quia nullo modo remittitur. Peccatum enim mortale, in quo homo perseverat usque ad mortem, quia in hac vita non remittitur per poenitentiam, nec etiam in futuro dimittetur. Secundum autem alias duas acceptiones dicitur irremissibile, non quod nullo modo remittatur, sed quia, quantum est de se, habet meritum, ut non remittatur, et hoc dupliciter. Uno modo quantum ad poenam; qui enim ex ignorantia vel infirmitate peccat, minorem poenam meretur, qui autem ex certa malitia peccat, non habet aliquam excusationem, unde eius poena minuatur. Similiter etiam, qui blasphemabat Filium hominis, eius divinitate nondum revelatâ, poterat habere aliquam excusationem propter infirmitatem carnis, quam in eo aspiciebat,*

The sins against the Holy Ghost according to the Catechism are: (1) Presumption of God's mercy; (2) Despair; (3) Resisting the known Christian truth; (4) Envy at another's spiritual good; (5) Obstinacy in sin; and (6) Final impenitence.

This division is popular rather than scientific, but it correctly describes the psychological stages of the malice that leads to final impenitence. The so-called sin against the Holy Ghost, therefore, is not a single sin but the sum-total of a bad life.[6] At what stage actual impenitence sets in, God alone knows.[7] The Church assumes that every

et sic minorem poenam merebatur. Sed qui in ipsam divinitatem blasphemabat, opera Spiritus Sancti diabolo attribuens, nullam excusationem habebat, unde eius poena diminueretur. . . . Alio modo potest intellegi quoad culpam. Sicut aliquis dicitur morbus incurabilis secundum naturam morbi, per quem tollitur id, per quod morbus potest curari, puta quum morbus tollit virtutem naturae vel inducit fastidium cibi et medicinae, licet talem morbum Deus possit curare, ita etiam peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum dicitur irremissibile secundum suam naturam, inquantum excludit ea, per quae fit remissio peccatorum. Per hoc tamen non praecluditur via remittendi et sanandi omnipotentiae et misericordiae Dei, per quam aliquando tales quasi miraculose spiritualiter sanantur."

6 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 14, art. 4: *"Peccare in Spiritum Sanctum uno modo est peccare ex certa malitia. Ex certa autem malitia dupliciter peccare contingit. Uno modo ex inclinatione habitus, quod non est proprie peccare in Spiritum Sanctum, et hoc modo peccare ex certa malitia non contingit a principio. Oportet enim actus peccatorum praecedere, ex quibus causetur habitus ad peccandum inclinans. Alio modo potest aliquis peccare ex certa malitia abiciendo per contemptum ea, per quae homo retrahitur a peccato, quod proprie est peccare in Spiritum Sanctum. Et hoc etiam plerumque praesupponit alia peccata. . . . Potest tamen contingere, quod aliquis in primo actu peccati in Spiritum Sanctum peccet per contemptum, tum propter libertatem arbitrii, tum etiam propter multas dispositiones praecedentes vel etiam propter aliquod vehemens motivum ad malum et debilem affectum hominis ad bonum. Et ideo in viris perfectis hoc vix aut nunquam accidere potest, quod statim a principio peccent in Spiritum Sanctum. . . . Si vero per peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum intellegatur finalis impoenitentia secundum intellectum Augustini, quaestionem non habet, quia ad peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum requiritur continuatio peccatorum usque in finem vitae."*

7 St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 71 (*al.* 11 *De Verbis Domini*), c. 13, n. 21: *"Ista impoenitentia vel cor impoenitens quamdiu quisque in hac carne vivit, non potest iudicari. De nullo enim desperandum est, quam-*

man wishes to die in the state of grace. St. Augustine says that as long as there is life there is hope, that "the Almighty Physician knows no incurable disease," and while grace has a chance to work, no sinner need be given up.[8]

A man may be addicted to some evil passion or vice, though morality, faith, contrition, and penance are by no means extinct in his soul. Conversely, he may be in the state of impenitence without having entirely relinquished the practice of religion and virtue, for he may keep up a semblance of piety out of selfishness or hypocrisy. . . . On the other hand, there is a state of the soul which logically and psychologically, though only by gradual and almost unnoticeable stages, superinduces complete impenitence. As every sin committed by a Catholic receives added gravity from the fact that it is the act of one who possesses the true faith and has access to the means of grace, so the sin against the Holy Ghost begins with an abuse of divine truth and grace, with resistance to the inspirations that come from above, especially the call to conversion or to a more perfect state of life. This initial stage is followed by habitual neglect of the duties of one's vocation, and, finally, by sacrilegious reception of the Sacraments.[9]

diu patientia Dei ad poenitentiam adducit nec de hac vita rapit impium, qui non mortem vult impii, inquantum ut revertatur et vivat." (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 456).—Idem, *De Catech. Rud.*, c. 26, n. 50: *"De nullius hominis correctione desperet, quem patientia Dei videt vivere, non ob aliud, sicut Apostolus (Rom. II, 4) ait, nisi ut adducatur ad poenitentiam."* (*P. L.*, XL, 345).

8 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, II, 36, n. 11: *"De nullo vivente desperandum est."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVI, 370).—*Ibid.*, 102, n. 5: *"Sanabuntur omnes languores tui, noli timere. Magni sunt, inquies, sed maior est medicus. Omnipotenti medico nullus languor insanabilis occurrit."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1319).—Idem, *Serm.*, 128 (*al.* 43 *De Verbis Dom.*), c. 12, n. 14: *"De nullo iacente desperandum est sub tali suscitatore."* (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 720).—Cfr. *Serm.*, 17 (*al.* 28 *inter Hom.* 50), n. 3 (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 125).

9 F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 183 sq.

3. Devil Worship.—Sometimes the sin against the Holy Ghost culminates in a deliberate and complete surrender of the soul to the evil one, resulting in actual devil worship.[10] The leading characteristic of this terrible sin is hatred of God, which manifests itself in deadly antagonism to all that is good, joy in evil things, a burning desire to seduce others and to commit sin for its own sake.[11] Devil worship is the climax of human malice and embraces all the capital vices, the sins that cry to Heaven for vengeance, and especially those by which a man becomes accessory to the sins of others. Sometimes the soul sinks so low as to enter into a formal union with the powers of darkness (demonism, deification of evil). This relation is, as a rule, purely moral, but it may develop into a mystic marriage of the human mind with Satan, accompanied by a desire to employ diabolic help in unraveling the mysteries of life and eternity (astrology, fortune-telling, necromancy) or performing feats that exceed the ordinary powers of nature (black magic, sorcery).[12]

Readings.—St. Augustine, *De Serm. Domini in Monte,* I, c. 22.—Idem, *Enchiridion,* c. 83.—Idem, *Sermones,* 71 (*al. 11 De Verbis Domini*), c. 13, 14, 21.—Richard of St. Victor, *Tractatus*

10 Cfr. Matth. XII, 43 sqq.; John VI, 70; VIII, 44; XIII, 2; 1 John III, 8, 10.

11 Cfr. Gen. IV, 3–5, 8; Is. V, 20; 1 John III, 12–13.—Cfr. Tacitus, *Germania,* XIX: *"Corrumpere et corrumpi saeculum vocatur."*

12 *"Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo."* (*Aeneis,* VII, 312).

de Spiritu Blasphemiae (Migne, *P. L.*, CXCVI, 1885).—Peter Lombard, *Sententiarum Libri Quatuor*, II, dist. 43.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 2a 2ae, qu. 14.—IDEM, *De Malo*, qu. 3, art. 14 sq.—St. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, P. III, c. 11.—M. Gerbert, *De Peccato in Spiritum Sanctum*, Blasii 1766.—J. I. Hoffmann, *Die Sünde und Sünden gegen den hl. Geist*, Ratisbon 1847, pp. 16 sqq.—Alex. ab Oettingen, *De Peccato in Spiritum Sanctum*, Dorpat 1856, pp. 49 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 393 sqq.—J. Knabenbauer, S.J., *Comment. in Quatuor S. Evangelia*, Paris 1892, Vol. I, pp. 487 sqq.—J. Forget in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. VII, pp. 414 sq.

PART II
THE MEANS OF GRACE

CHAPTER I

THE CAUSES OF MORAL REGENERATION

SECTION 1

THE SUPERNATURAL PRINCIPLE OF MORAL REGENERATION

The moral order originally established by God was, as we have seen, disturbed by the sin of our first parents and restored by Jesus Christ. The principle of its restoration in general, and of the moral regeneration of each human individual in particular, is supernatural grace.[1]

1. We can acquire no supernatural merits without grace.

a) Reason enables man to perceive the truths of the natural order. For the knowledge of the supernatural truths, however, he needs a stronger light.[2] "The human intellect," says St. Thomas, "has a form, namely, intelligent

1 Cfr. John I, 17; Rom. V, 20 sq.; 2 Cor. V, 19–21; Eph. II, 8–10. Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *Grace*, 2nd ed., St. Louis 1917.

2 1 Cor. XIII, 3; 2 Cor. III, 5.

light, which of itself is sufficient for knowing certain intelligible things, namely, those we can come to know through the senses. Higher intelligible things the human intellect cannot know unless it be perfected by a stronger light, *viz.:* that of faith or prophecy, which is called the light of grace, inasmuch as it is added to nature."[3] Nor is it the intellect alone that depends on God for its operation; but the will also. No man can will or perform a supernaturally good act except by the aid of a higher power;[4] nor can any man, without this power (which we call divine grace), love God above all things[5] or keep the com-

3 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 1: "*Intellectus humanus habet aliquam formam, scilicet ipsum intellegibile lumen, quod est de se sufficiens ad quaedam intellegibilia cognoscenda, ad ea scilicet, in quorum notitiam per sensibilia possumus devenire. Altiora vero intellegibilia intellectus humanus cognoscere non potest nisi fortiori lumine perficiatur, sicut lumine fidei vel prophetiae, quod dicitur lumen gratiae, inquantum est naturae superadditum. Sic igitur dicendum est quod ad cognitionem cuiuscunque veri homo indiget auxilio divino, ut intellectus a Deo moveatur ad suum actum.*"

4 Cfr. Rom. IX, 16; Phil. II, 13. —St. Augustine, *De Corrept. et Grat.*, c. 2, n. 3: "*Intellegenda est gratia Dei per Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum, quâ solâ homines liberantur a malo et sine quâ nullum prorsus sive cogitando sive volendo et amando sive agendo faciunt bonum, non solum ut monstrante ipsâ quid faciendum sit sciant, verum etiam ut praestante ipsâ faciant cum dilectione, quod sciunt.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 917).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 2: "*In utroque statu* [*naturae integrae et corruptae*] *indiget homo auxilio divino, ut ab ipso moveatur ad bene agendum.*"—Cfr. *Prop. Baii Damnat.*, prop. 37: "*Cum Pelagio sentit, qui boni aliquid naturalis, hoc est, quod ex naturae solis viribus ortum ducit, agnoscit.*"—Prop. 65: "*Nonnisi Pelagiano errore admitti potest usus aliquis liberi arbitrii bonus sive non malus, et gratiae Christi iniuriam facit, qui ita sentit et docet.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 917, 945).—Cfr. J. Ernst, *Die Werke und Tugenden der Ungläubigen nach St. Augustin*, Freiburg 1871, pp. 19 sqq.

5 Cfr. Rom. V, 5.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 2, n. 3: "*Homo in statu naturae integrae non indigebat dono gratiae superadditae naturalibus bonis ad*

mandments perfectly,[6] or attain eternal salvation.[7]

b) God is the immediate principle of all supernatural operation, including that by which

diligendum Deum naturaliter supra omnia, licet indigeret auxilio Dei ad hoc eum moventis, sed in statu naturae corruptae indiget homo etiam ad hoc auxilio gratiae naturam sanantis."

6 Cfr. John XV, 4 sq.—St. Augustine, *De Haeres.*, 88: *"Pelagiani in tantum inimici sunt Dei gratiae, ut sine hac posse hominem credant facere omnia divina mandata."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLII, 47).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 4: *"Implere mandata legis contingit dupliciter. Uno modo quantum ad substantiam operum, prout scilicet homo operatur iusta et fortia et alia virtutis opera, et hoc modo homo in statu naturae integrae potuit omnia mandata legis implere; alioquin homo non potuisset in statu illo non peccare, quum nihil aliud sit peccare quam transgredi divina mandata; sed in statu naturae corruptae non potest homo implere omnia mandata divina sine gratiâ sanante. Alio modo possunt impleri mandata legis non solum quantum ad substantiam operis, sed etiam quantum ad modum agendi, ut scilicet ex caritate fiant; et sic neque in statu naturae integrae neque in statu naturae corruptae potest homo implere absque gratiâ legis mandata. . . . Indigent insuper in utroque statu auxilio Dei moventis ad mandata implenda."*

7 Cfr. Rom. VI, 23: Τὸ *χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ* Ἰ*ησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.*—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 5: *"Vita aeterna est finis excedens proportionem naturae humanae, et ideo homo per sua naturalia non potest producere opera meritoria proportionata vitae aeternae, sed ad hoc exigitur altior virtus, quae est virtus gratiae. Et ideo sine gratia homo non potest mereri vitam aeternam."*—Idem, *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, c. 148, n. 2, 3: *"Res inferioris naturae in id quod est proprium superioris naturae non potest perduci nisi virtute illius superioris naturae, sicut luna quae ex se non lucet, fit lucida virtute et actione solis, et aqua quae per se non calet, fit calida virtute et actione ignis.* [And dogs and horses, parrots and monkeys, learn tricks by contact with man, which they never would have learnt in their wild state. And savages are civilized by coming in contact with a culture higher than their own, but for which contact with a higher race they would have remained perennial savages. As man humanizes the brute, and civilizes his savage brother, so does God divinize man.—Jos. Rickaby, S.J., *Of God and His Creatures*, London 1905, p. 319]. *Videre autem ipsam primam veritatem in seipsa* [in which precisely eternal beatitude consists] *ita transcendit facultatem humanae naturae, quod est proprium solius Dei. Indiget igitur homo auxilio divino ad hoc quod in dictum finem* [*i. e.*, *ad beatitudinem*] *perveniat. Unaquaeque res per operationem suam ultimum finem consequitur. Operatio autem virtutem sortitur ex principio operante, unde per actionem seminis generatur aliquid in determinata specie, cuius virtus in semine praeexsistit. Non potest igitur homo*

man prepares himself for the reception of grace. Hence divine grace is indispensably necessary for this preparation.[8] This is all the more evident when it is considered that God alone had it in His power to redeem mankind after the fall, to restore the moral order, and to forgive the eternal punishment incurred by sin.[9] Even if put in the state of grace man cannot remain therein without continuous help from his Maker. Hence it is quite true to say that man can do nothing towards securing his salvation except by the grace of God.[10] In this

per operationem suam pervenire in ultimum finem suum, qui transcendit facultatem naturalium potentiarum, nisi eius operatio ex divinâ virtute efficaciam capiat ad finem praedictum."

8 John VI, 44; XV, 5.—Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 3: *"Si quis dixerit, sine praeveniente Spiritus Sancti inspiratione atque eius adiutorio hominem credere, sperare, diligere aut poenitere posse, sicut oportet, ut ei iustificationis gratia conferatur, anathema sit."*—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 6: *"Hoc est praeparare se ad gratiam quasi ad Deum converti, sicut ille, qui habet oculum aversum a lumine solis, per hoc se praeparat ad recipiendum lumen solis, quod oculos suos convertit versus solem. Unde patet, quod homo non potest se praeparare ad lumen gratiae suscipiendum, nisi per auxilium gratuitum Dei interius moventis."*

9 Gal. II, 21.—Cfr. *Conc. Arausic. II.*, can. 14: *"Nullus miser de quacunque miseriâ liberatur, nisi qui Dei misericordiâ praevenitur."*—Can. 19: *"Quum [natura humana] sine Dei gratiâ salutem non possit custodire, quam accepit, quomodo sine Dei gratiâ poterit reparare, quod perdidit?"* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 187, 192).—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 95, n. 5: *"Vendere se [homines] potuerunt, sed redimere non potuerunt."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1231).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 7: *"Homo nullo modo potest resurgere a peccato per seipsum sine auxilio gratiae. Quum enim peccatum transiens actu remaneat reatu, non est idem resurgere a peccato quod cessare ab actu peccati, sed resurgere a peccato est reparari hominem ad ea quae peccando amisit. . . . Et ideo requiritur auxilium gratiae ad hoc, quod homo a peccato resurget, et quantum ad habituale donum et quantum ad interiorem Dei motionem."*—Cfr. Seneca, *Epist.*, 52, 2: *"Nemo per se satis valet, ut emergat."*

10 Phil. II, 13.—*Conc. Arausic. II.*, can. 9: *"Divini est muneris, quum et recte cogitamus et pedes*

sense it has been truly said that the only thing man can do is to sin.[11]

2. The process of justification, by which a sinner is restored to the friendship of God, cannot take place without grace. It was in man's power to offend God, but it is not in his power to redeem himself.[12] The omnipotent Creator alone can revive a dead soul.[13] Reconciled to the human race by the atonement, in which His only Son

nostros a falsitate et iniustitiâ continemus; quoties enim bona agimus, Deus in nobis atque nobiscum, ut operemur, operatur." Can. 10: "*Adiutorium Dei etiam renatis ac sanctis semper est implorandum, ut ad finem bonum pervenire, vel in bono possint opere perdurare.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 182, 183). Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 22 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 832).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 109, art. 8–10.

11 St. Augustine, *Contra Duas Epist. Pelagian.*, III, c. 8, n. 24: "*Liberum arbitrium captivatum nonnisi ad peccatum valet, ad iustitiam vero nisi divinitus liberatum adiutumque non valet.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 607).—Idem, *De Corrept. et Grat.*, c. 11, n. 31: "*Liberum arbitrium ad malum sufficit, ad bonum autem parum est nisi adiuvetur ab omnipotenti bono.*" (*P. L.*, XLIV, 935).—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Comment. in Sent.*, II, dist. 28, qu. 1, ad 4: "*Secundum fidem catholicam in medio contrariarum haeresum incedendum est, ut scilicet dicamus, hominem per liberum arbitrium et bona et mala facere posse, non tamen in actum meritorium exire sine habitu gratiae.*"

12 St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 95, n. 5: "*Vendere se potuerunt* [*homines*], *sed redimere non potuerunt. Venit redemptor et dedit pretium; fudit sanguinem, emit orbem terrarum.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1231).—Cfr. the same author's *Sermones*, 20, n. 1 (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 137).

13 St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 155 (*al.* 52), c. 1, n. 2: "*Neque facit beatum hominem, nisi qui facit hominem.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIII, 667).—Idem, *Contra Iulian.*, I, c. 105: "*A peccatis omnibus, sive originalibus sive moralibus, vel quae facta sunt, vel ne fiant, non liberat nisi gratia Dei per Iesum Christum, Dominum nostrum, in quo regenerati sumus et a quo didicimus orando dicere non solum: 'Dimitte nobis debita nostra,' id est, quia peccavimus, verum etiam: 'ne nos inferas in tentationem,' id est, ne peccemus.*" (*P. L.*, XLV, 1119).—Idem, *Enchirid.*, c. 48, n. 14: "*Illud unum peccatum* [*originale*] . . . *non solvitur ac diluitur, nisi per unum mediatorem Dei et hominum, Christum Iesum* (*1 Tim. ii, 5*), *qui solus potuit ita nasci, ut ei opus non esset renasci.*" (*P. L.*, XL, 255).—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 1.

gave up His life for the love of men,[14] God justifies the individual sinner by infusing sanctifying grace into his soul and forgiving him his sins.[15]

The first requisite of justification, therefore, is divine grace, and the moral regeneration of the sinner is God's work,—a work more wonderful than the creation of heaven and earth, because grace implies a participation of the creature in the divine nature and consequently transcends all natural agencies.[16]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 1a 2ae, qu. 110–114.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual,* 2nd ed., St. Louis 1917, pp. 272 sqq.—A. Rietter, *Die Moral des hl. Thomas von Aquin,* Munich 1858, pp. 275 sqq.—J. H. Newman, *Lectures on the Doctrine of Justification,* 8th impression, London 1900.

14 Cfr. Matth. XX, 28; XXVI, 28; Mark X, 45; XIV, 24; Luke XXII, 19; Rom. V, 10; 2 Cor. V, 18 sq.; Eph. II, 16; Col. I, 20; 1 Tim. II, 6; Tit. II, 14; 1 Pet. I, 18 sq.; II, 24.

15 Cfr. 1 Cor. VI, 11; Tit. III, 5-7.—*Conc. Trident.,* Sess. VI, c. 7: "*Iustificatio . . . non est sola peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et renovatio interioris hominis.*"—Can. 11: "*Si quis dixerit, homines iustificari vel solâ imputatione iustitiae Christi, vel solâ peccatorum remissione, exclusâ gratia et caritate, quae in cordibus eorum per Spiritum Sanctum diffundatur atque illis inhaereat, . . . anathema sit.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 799, 821).

16 Cfr. Ps. CXLIV, 9.—St. Augustine, *Tract. in Ioa.,* 72, n. 3: "*Prorsus maius hoc* [*opus*] *esse dixerim, quam est caelum et terra et quaecunque cernuntur in caelo et in terra. Et caelum enim et terra transibit* (*Mt. xxiv, 35*)*, praedestinatorum autem, id est, eorum quos praescivit, salus et iustificatio permanebit. In illis tantum opera Dei, in his autem etiam est imago Dei.*" (Migne, *P. L.,* XXXV, 1823).—The Roman Missal contains this oration for the tenth Sunday after Pentecost: "*Deus, qui omnipotentiam tuam parcendo maxime et miserando manifestas, multiplica super nos misericordiam tuam,*" etc.

SECTION 2

THE NATURAL REQUISITE OF MORAL REGENERATION

Though "the justification of the sinner is brought about by God moving man to justice," [1] moral regeneration in the case of adults is not a compulsory, much less a magical process, but one that takes place in a manner corresponding to human nature, *i. e.*, by the free coöperation of the will with grace.[2]

1 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 1–3.—Cfr. Saint Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 113, art. 3: "*Iustificatio impii fit Deo movente hominem ad iustitiam. Ipse enim est, qui iustificat impium* (*Rom.* iii, 24)."

2 St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 169 (*al.* 15 *de Verbis Apost.*), c. 11, n. 13: "*Esse potest iustitia Dei sine voluntate tuâ, sed in te esse non potest praeter voluntatem tuam. . . . Qui fecit te sine te, non te iustificat sine te. Ergo fecit nescientem, iustificat volentem.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 923).—The Angelic Doctor continues as follows in the passage quoted above (*Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 113, art. 3): "*Deus autem movet omnia secundum modum uniuscuiusque, sicut in naturalibus videmus, quod aliter moventur ab ipso gravia et aliter levia propter diversam naturam utriusque. Unde et hominem ad iustitiam movet secundum conditionem naturae humanae. Homo autem secundum propriam naturam habet quod sit liberi arbitrii. Et ideo in eo qui habet usum liberi arbitrii non fit motio a Deo ad iustitiam absque motu liberi arbitrii, sed ita infundit donum gratiae iustificantis, quod etiam simul cum hoc movet liberum arbitrium ad donum gratiae acceptandum in his qui sunt huius motionis capaces.*"—*Contra Gent.*, l. 3, c. 148, n. 2: "*Divinum auxilium sic intellegitur ad bene agendum homini adhiberi, quod in nobis nostra opera operatur, sicut causa prima operatur operationes causarum secundarum et agens principale operatur actionem instrumenti* (*Is. XXVI, 12*). *Causa autem prima causat operationem causae secundae secundum modum ipsius. Ergo et Deus causat in nobis nostra opera secundum modum nostrum, qui est*

Justification, therefore, presupposes a rational creature endowed with free-will and voluntarily subjecting itself to God.[3] This movement of the will towards God takes place by faith,[4] which turns the soul away from sin and directs it towards God.[5]

Because concupiscence remains in the soul even

ut voluntarie et non coacte agamus. Non divino igitur auxilio aliquis cogitur ad recte agendum."

3 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 4: *"Si quis dixerit, liberum hominis arbitrium a Deo motum et excitatum nihil cooperari assentiendo Deo excitanti atque vocanti, quo ad obtinendam iustificationis gratiam se disponat ac praeparet, neque posse dissentire, si velit, sed veluti inanime quoddam nihil omnino agere, mereque passive se habere, anathema sit."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 814).

4 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 113, art. 4: *"Motus liberi arbitrii requiritur ad iustificationem impii, secundum quod mens hominis movetur a Deo. Deus autem movet animam hominis convertendo eam ad seipsum (Ps. LXXXIV, 7). Et ideo ad iustificationem impii requiritur motus mentis, quo convertitur in Deum. Prima autem conversio in Deum fit per fidem (Hebr. XI, 6). Et ideo motus fidei requiritur ad iustificationem impii."*

5 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 113, art. 5: *"Iustificatio impii est quidam motus, quo humana mens movetur a Deo a statu peccati in statum iustitiae. Oportet igitur, quod humana mens se habeat ad utrumque extremorum secundum motum liberi arbitrii, sicut se habet corpus localiter motum ab aliquo movente ad duos terminos motus. Manifestum est autem, in motu locali corporum, quod corpus motum recedit a termino a quo et accedit ad terminum ad quem. Unde oportet, quod mens humana, dum iustificatur, per motum liberi arbitrii recedat a peccato et accedat ad iustitiam. Recessus autem et accessus in motu liberi arbitrii accipitur secundum detestationem et desiderium. . . . Oportet igitur, quod in iustificatione impii sit motus liberi arbitrii duplex: unus, quo per desiderium tendat in Dei iustitiam, et alius, quo detestetur peccatum."*—*Ibid.*, art. 6: *"Quattuor enumerantur, quae requiruntur ad iustificationem impii, scilicet gratiae infusio, motus liberi arbitrii in Deum per fidem et motus liberi arbitrii in peccatum et remissio culpae."*—*Ibid.*, art. 7: *"Tota iustificatio impii originaliter consistit in gratiae infusione. Per eam enim et liberum arbitrium movetur et culpa remittitur."*—*Conc. Trid.*, Sess. VI, cap. 6: *"Illum [Deum] tamquam omnis iustitiae fontem diligere incipiunt [peccatores], ac propterea moventur adversus peccata per odium aliquod et detestationem."*—Cap. 7: *"Hanc dispositionem seu praeparationem iustificatio ipsa consequitur, quae non est sola peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et renovatio interioris hominis per voluntariam susceptionem gratiae et donorum, unde homo ex iniusto fit iustus, et ex inimico amicus, ut sit haeres secundum spem vitae aeternae (Tit. iii, 7)."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 798, 799).

after this moral regeneration,[6] man must fight all his life against the enemies of his eternal salvation and endeavor to secure it by obedience to the commandments, by prayer and abstinence, by works of faith, hope, and charity,—in a word, he must strive unremittingly to grow "in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."[7] Though the struggle may at times seem well nigh hopeless, God's grace makes victory still possible. "In all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us," say the Tridentine Fathers,[8] and add: "God forsakes not those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them."[9]

The necessity of coöperating with grace is illustrated in the parable of the man who failed to watch for

6 Rom. VII, 23; Gal. V, 17; Jas. I, 14; cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. V, can. 5.

7 Eph. IV, 13, 15; cfr. Matth. X, 34 sqq.; XVI, 24; XIX, 17; XXVI, 41; Rom. V, 1 sqq.; VII, 18 sqq.; 2 Pet. I, 10.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, cap. 10: *"Sic ergo iustificati, et amici Dei ac domestici* [*Ioa. xv, 15; Eph. ii, 19*] *facti, euntes de virtute in virtutem* [*Ps. lxxxiii, 8*], *renovantur, ut Apostolus inquit de die in diem* [*2 Cor. iv, 16*], *hoc est, mortificando membra carnis suae* [*Col. iii, 5*] *et exhibendo ea arma iustitiae* [*Rom. vi, 13, 19*] *in sanctificationem: per observationem mandatorum Dei et Ecclesiae in ipsa iustitia per Christi gratiam acceptâ, cooperante fide bonis operibus, crescunt atque magis iustificantur."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 803).

8 Rom. VIII, 37; cfr. Matth. XI, 30; 1 John V, 3.—St. Augustine says in his treatise *De Natura et Gratia*, c. 43, n. 50: *"Nam Deus impossibilia non iubet, sed iubendo monet et facere quod possis, et petere quod non possis."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 271).—The Council of Trent (Sess. VI, c. 11) quotes these words, and adds: *"et adiuvat, ut possis."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 804).

9 *"Deus namque suâ gratiâ semel iustificatos non deserit, nisi ab eis prius deseratur."* (*Ibid.*)

the thief,[10] that of the faithful servant,[11] that of the wise and the foolish virgins,[12] that of the talents which the master gave to his servants, and others.[13]

Sanctifying grace is ordinarily attached to certain visible signs, called Sacraments,—"through which," in the words of the Tridentine Fathers, "all true justice either begins, or being begun is increased, or being lost is repaired." [14]

These means of grace man is in duty bound to use,—which is but another way of saying that he must submit himself to the Church established by Jesus Christ.[15]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 1a 2ae, qu. 113.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual,* 2nd ed., St. Louis, 1917, pp. 274 sqq.—*Codex Iuris Canonici,* can. 731–1144. (In this work we have duly noted the changes made necessary by the new Code. A succinct statement of them will be found in A. Viladevall, *Mutationes in Theologiam Moralem a Novo Codice Iuris Canonici Inductae,* Buenos Aires 1917).

10 Matth. XXIV, 43 sqq.
11 Matth. XXV, 1 sqq.
12 Matth. XXIV, 45 sqq.
13 Matth. XXV, 14 sqq.
14 *Conc. Trident.,* Sess. VI, can. 20; Sess. VII, Prooem.
15 *Conc. Trident.,* Sess. VII, *De Sacr.,* can. 4; *De Bapt.,* can. 8 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 847, 864).

CHAPTER II

THE SACRAMENTS AS DIVINELY INSTITUTED MEANS OF GRACE

SECTION I

THE MORAL REQUISITES OF VALID ADMINISTRATION

1. The efficacy of the Sacraments depends solely on the will of God, and hence all that is required for their valid administration on the part of the minister is power and jurisdiction, proper application of matter and form, and an actual or at least a virtual intention of doing what the Church does.[1]

It is a mortal sin for any one not in the state of sanctifying grace to administer a Sacrament solemnly. Ignorance, of course, is an excuse, and so is urgent necessity, as when the administration of Baptism or Penance cannot be postponed without danger to the salvation of others. In such urgent cases the minister is

[1] *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VII, *De Sacr.*, can. 10, 11, 12; Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, can. 10 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 853, 854, 855, 920).

called *minister necessitatis;* in all others, *minister solemnitatis.*

Hence the general rule that no Sacrament should be performed or administered by one who is in the state of mortal sin. One who is so unfortunate as to be called upon to administer a Sacrament in that state, should first cleanse himself by the worthy reception of Penance, if he can conveniently find a confessor (*habitâ copiâ confessoris*),[2] or else by an act of perfect contrition.

Matrimony is the only Sacrament that is not administered by the priest but by the contracting parties to each other, and hence husband and wife are themselves the ministers.[3] They should receive this holy Sacrament in the state of grace, which means, ordinarily, that they should go to confession and Communion before plighting their troth.

In regard to the other Sacraments the question arises: If a priest who is in the state of mortal sin be called upon to administer a Sacrament, must he go to confession, or is perfect contrition sufficient? We answer: Perfect contrition suffices for all Sacraments except the Holy Eucharist (*i. e.*, saying Mass). The reason is

2 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, cap. 7, can. 11; *Rit. Rom.*, *De Administr. Sacram.*, tit. 1, n. 4; *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 807.

3 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXIV, *De Reform. Matr.*, c. 1; *Rit. Rom.*, *De Sacr. Matr.*, tit. 7, c. 1, n. 17.

this: Perfect contrition, including the *votum sacramenti*, restores sanctifying grace, and the administration of all the Sacraments, with the exception of the consecration of the Eucharist, is always, morally speaking, a matter of necessity. When the celebration of Mass is a matter of necessity, as sometimes happens, it will suffice for the priest to make an act of perfect contrition, but he is bound to receive the Sacrament of Penance as soon thereafter as an opportunity offers, *i. e.*, at least within three days, according to the common interpretation of the law.[4]

It follows that all those who are *ex officio* entrusted with the administration of the means of grace, are in duty bound to hold themselves in readiness to administer the Sacraments, in other words, to be habitually in the state of grace.[5]

So much for the interior disposition of the minister. Now for the act of administration. As the minister acts in the name and by authority of the Church, the first rule is that he must comply with her directions. *Sancta sancte tractanda.* Hence it is a mortal sin knowingly to employ the wrong matter or form, or, except in

4 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 5–6.—*Missale Rom.*, *De Defect. in Cel. Missae*, tit. 8, n. 2 sq.—*Prop. Damnat. ab Alexandro VII.*, 38: "*Mandatum Tridentini factum sacerdoti sacrificanti ex necessitate cum peccato mortali, confitendi quamprimum, est consilium, non praeceptum.*"—Prop. 39: "*Illa particula 'quamprimum' intellegitur, quum sacerdos suo tempore confitebitur.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1138 sq.).—Cfr. Ferreres, *Comp. Theol. M.*, ed. 8a, Vol. II, n. 431, qu. 5.

5 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, CIII, s. 1, n. 9: "*Videant, qualem rationem habituri sunt cum Deo, qui sanctis non sancte utuntur.*" (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXXVII, 1343).

case of necessity, a matter or form of doubtful validity; since this would endanger the Sacrament. In cases of necessity (*iustâ causâ*) a doubtful matter or form may be employed, because the Sacraments are instituted for the sake of men (*sacramenta propter homines*). It is likewise sinful (mortally or venially, according to the circumstances of each case) to alter or mutilate the words of the form, to utter them inarticulately or without devotion, or to omit important rites or ceremonies prescribed by the Church. If this is done out of contempt for Christ or the Church, or if it causes grave scandal, the minister commits a mortal sin, and even when the motive is mere negligence, a mortal sin is committed every time the object is *materia gravis*.[6]

2. The faithful have a right to the Sacraments, and hence all duly appointed ministers of the Church are bound in justice to administer the same whenever they are asked, and should always be ready and willing to comply with every reasonable request, nay exhort their people to make frequent use of the divinely appointed means of grace.[7] It is a mortal sin for a priest entrusted with the care of souls to refuse to administer a Sacrament without good reason, or to administer it with manifest reluctance. Such conduct is apt to deter the faithful from the reception of the Sacraments and easily causes scan-

6 Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VII, *De Sacr.*, can. 13 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 856); *Rit. Rom.*, *De Administr. Sacram.*, tit. 1, n. 11.

7 Cfr. *Concilium Trident.*, Sess. XXIII, *De Ref.*, c. 1; *Rit. Rom.*, *De Administr. Sacram.*, n. 5.

dal. The duty of administering Baptism and Penance, in particular, binds even when there is danger of contracting a contagious disease or incurring grave risk to life or limb.[8] Of course, all reasonable precautions may and should be taken in such cases. The duty just mentioned does not bind priests who are not officially engaged in pastoral work, though all are bound to respond to urgent calls when there is grave necessity, as, *e. g.*, on the field of battle, or when some one is seriously ill or dying and no other priest can be had. The same rule applies to a pastor in his conduct towards those not under his care. We need hardly add, however, that no true priest will confine himself to what is of strict duty in matters of this kind.

It is forbidden (*extra periculum mortis*) to administer the Sacraments to persons who are notoriously unworthy (*publice indigni*), especially if these persons are excommunicated by name, or are under an interdict, or if they lead a life of public infamy, *e. g.*, prostitutes, fortune tellers, concubinarians, and Freemasons publicly known as such, unless indeed they have done penance and repaired the scandal given. The reason for this prohibition is the danger of scandalizing the faithful and Christ's admonition not to give that which is holy to the dogs nor to cast pearls before swine.[9]

8 John X, 11–13.—Benedict XIV, *De Synodo Dioecesana*, XIII, c. 19, n. 8.—Cfr. I. Chapeauville, *Tract. de Necessitate et Modo Ministrandi Sacramenta Tempore Pestis*, Mayence 1612.

9 Matth. VII, 6.—Cfr. 1 Tim. V, 22.—*Rit. Rom.*, *De S. Eucharist.*

In applying this rule attention must be paid to the distinction between public and private sinners and to the nature of the request made. If the priest knows of the unworthiness of an applicant only by his official position, *i. e.*, through the confessional, he is obliged to administer the Sacrament asked for, *e. g.*, Holy Communion, because the preservation of the seal and the good name of the recipient are more important than regard for the sanctity of the Sacrament. Hence if a person who is guilty of secret sin should publicly demand a Sacrament, his demand must not be refused if there is danger of public defamation or grave scandal. The case is different with public sinners and secret offenders who apply privately to the priest. To such (*extra periculum mortis*) no Sacrament should be administered except Penance and, under certain conditions, Matrimony.

To simulate a Sacrament, *e. g.*, by administering an unconsecrated host, is never allowed, not even for the purpose of preventing sacrilege or saving one's life.[10] To bless or pray over a penitent not properly disposed, in order to protect the secret of the confessional or the good name of the sinner, is not a *simulatio* or *fictio sacramenti*, and therefore permitted.[11]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 3a, qu. 60-90.—St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, l. VI, tr. 1-5 (ed. Gaudé, Vol. III).—P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den hl. Sakramenten*, Freiburg 1893, pp. 161 sqq.—N. Gihr, *Die hl. Sakramente der kath. Kirche*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1902, pp. 140 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. VI, 3rd ed., pp. 98 sqq.—P. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments*, 2nd ed., St. Louis

Sacr., tit. 4, c. 1, n. 8-9.—Chr. Pesch, *Praelect. Dogmaticae*, Vol. VI, 3rd ed., pp. 126 sqq.

10 The proposition: "*Urgens metus gravis est causa iusta sacramentorum administrationem simulandi*" was condemned by Pope Innocent XI (*Prop. Damnat.*, n. 29; Denz.-Bannwart, n. 1179).

11 H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, 11th ed., pp. 40 sq.

1914.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. I, St. Louis 1915, pp. 161 sqq.—Wilhelm-Scannell, *A Manual of Catholic Theology,* Vol. II, 2nd ed., London 1901, pp. 366 sqq.—J. E. Pruner, *Lehrbuch der Pastoraltheologie,* Vol. I, 2nd ed., Paderborn 1904, pp. 94 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. III, 11th ed., pp. 3 sqq.—J. de Lugo, *De Sacramentis in Genere,* disp. 1–9.—Ballerini-Palmieri, S.J., *Opus Theol. Mor.,* 3rd ed., Vol. IV, n. 642–710.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Moral.,* Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 1–43.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.,* 22nd ed., pp. 515 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 15 sqq.

SECTION 2

THE MORAL REQUISITES OF WORTHY RECEPTION

Regarding the moral requisites of worthy reception, a distinction must be drawn between what is necessary for the validity of a Sacrament and what is required for its licit and fruitful reception.

1. The valid reception of a Sacrament requires:

a) that the recipient be in the wayfaring state (*in statu viatoris*);

b) that (if he be an adult) he have the wish to employ the Sacrament as a means of grace;

c) that he be baptized.

Baptism, according to an ancient saying, is the door to the supernatural life. No other Sacrament can be validly received without it.[1]

As regards the necessary intention, this is supplied by the Church for infants, insane and weak-minded persons, and adults who lack the full use of reason.[2] When there is question of adminis-

[1] Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 238 sqq.; Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelect. Dogm.*, Vol. VI, 3rd ed., pp. 130 sqq.; N. Giehr, *Die hl. Sakramente*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 158 sqq.

[2] Cfr. Matth. VIII, 5–10; XV, 22–28; Mark IX, 16–26.

tering Extreme Unction to an unconscious Catholic, it may be presumed that the patient would wish to receive the Sacrament if he were in possession of his faculties. Penance and Extreme Unction require an actual, or at least a virtual, intention; for the other Sacraments (Baptism of adults, Confirmation, Communion, and Holy Orders) a habitual intention is sufficient.

2. For the licit and fruitful reception of Baptism (in the case of adults) and Penance there is required in the subject faith, hope, and imperfect contrition (*attritio*). One who has lost sanctifying grace after Baptism must regain it by a worthy confession before he can worthily receive Holy Communion.[8] The reception of Penance is recommended, though not prescribed, as the best means of preparing for the other Sacraments of the living. To receive any of these Sacraments consciously in the state of mortal sin is a sacrilege and a more grievous sin than would be the administration of a Sacrament in the same condition.

Broadly speaking, the faithful are in duty bound to demand the Sacraments only from properly constituted ministers of good character. Every priest is to be regarded as worthy unless his unworthiness is certain and notorious.

[8] *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 5–6; Sess. XIII, c. 7, can. 11 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 797, 798, 880, 893).

Readings.—P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den hl. Sakramenten*, Freiburg 1893, pp. 187 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. VI, 3rd ed., pp. 130 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. I, pp. 191 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, 22nd ed., pp. 526 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 42 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. II, pp. 41 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 37 sqq.

SECTION 3

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

1. BAPTISM.—Since the coming of Christ Baptism is "the laver of regeneration," [1] in which every man must be washed, either actually (*in re*), or at least in desire (*in voto*), in order to be saved.[2]

The necessity of Baptism, therefore, is a *necessitas medii;* but it is also a *necessitas praecepti,* on account of Christ's command to the Apostles to teach and baptize all nations.[3]

The precept of receiving Baptism obliges all who have the use of reason and are capable of receiving this Sacrament.[4] Nothing can dispense from this duty except utter inability.

a) Baptism being "the Sacrament of faith," is necessary for all men, including the children of Christian parents, and as an indispensable condition of membership in the mystic body of Christ imposes certain well-defined duties.

Parents and their representatives are bound

1 Tit. III, 5.

2 John III, 5.—*Conc. Trident.,* Sess. VI, c. 4; Sess. VII, *De Bapt.,* can. 2 sqq. (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 796, 858 sqq.)—Cfr. Pesch, *Praelect. Dogm.,* Vol. VI, 3rd ed., pp. 181 sqq.

3 Matth. XXVIII, 19.

4 *Conc. Trident.,* Sess. V, can. 4; Sess. VI, c. 7 (Denzinger-Bannwart,

under pain of grievous sin to have their children baptized as soon as possible after birth. To allow a child to die without Baptism is a mortal sin. As regards the time, due attention should be paid to approved custom and local ecclesiastical regulations. Under the present discipline infants must be baptized as soon as it can conveniently be done.[5] Most theologians deem it a mortal sin to defer Baptism for more than a month without reasonable cause. It is safe to say that the reception of this most important Sacrament should not be postponed for more than a few days unless there be some very good reason for delay.

The *Rituale Romanum* forbids a child to be baptized *in utero matris* on the ground that the Sacrament cannot be validly administered under such conditions. This prohibition is based on an assumption which has proved to be unfounded. With the means now at command it *is* possible to baptize an infant *in utero,* and therefore it should be done. If the head can be reached, the child should be baptized in the regular way, and the Baptism must not be repeated if the child is born alive; if the head cannot be reached but some

n. 799); *Rit. Rom., De Sacr. Bapt.,* tit. 2, c. 1, n. 1.

5 *Cat. Rom.,* P. II, c. 2, qu. 33.—Decree of the Holy Office, of Jan. 11, 1899: *"Urgendum est, ut baptismus quam citius ministretur."*—*Codex Iuris Can.,* can. 770: *"Infantes quamprimum baptizentur; et parochi ac concionatores frequenter fideles de hac gravi eorum obligatione commoneant."*

other limb protrudes, the child should be baptized conditionally and rebaptized *sub conditione* after birth.[6]

Apparently still-born infants, and such as are incompletely developed (*foetus abortivus*) or abnormally shaped (*monstra*), should be conditionally baptized if there is doubt whether they are dead or alive.[7]

In case a mother dies during pregnancy, the fetus should be carefully extracted from the womb and baptized,—absolutely if it is certainly alive, conditionally if there be doubt.[8]

Infants should be baptized privately immediately after birth if there is reason to fear that they will die before the Sacrament can be administered in the ordinary way. This precept implies the duty, on the part of physicians and midwives, of calling attention to such danger, where it exists, and on the part of all concerned of seeing to it that the Sacrament is administered in time.[9]

6 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 746, § 1: "*Nemo in utero matris clausus baptizetur, donec probabilis spes sit ut rite editus baptizari possit.*"—§ 2: "*Si infans caput emiserit et periculum mortis immineat, baptizetur in capite; nec postea, si vivus evaserit, est iterum sub conditione baptizandus.*"—§ 3: "*Si aliud membrum emiserit, in illo, si periculum immineat, baptizetur sub conditione; et tunc, si natus vixerit, est rursus sub conditione baptizandus.*"—Cfr. *Rit. Rom., De Sacr. Bapt.*, tit. 2, c. 1, n. 16.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 68, art. 11.

7 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 747, 748.

8 *Rit. Rom., De Sacr. Bapt.*, tit. 2, c. 1, n. 17.—Cfr. Stöhr-Kannamüller, *Handbuch der Pastoralmedizin*, 5th ed., Freiburg 1909, pp. 479 sqq.; Pruner, *Lehrb. d. Pastoraltheol.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 157 sqq.—*Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 746, § 4.

9 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 759, § 1;

b) After having their child baptized, parents are in duty bound to give it a good Christian education, in order that the grace conferred by Baptism may be preserved. In case of death or neglect, this duty devolves upon the sponsors, of whom there should be at least one and not more than two.[10]

2. Confirmation.—The Sacrament of Confirmation bestows the grace to be "a good soldier of Christ Jesus,"[11] to profess the Catholic faith courageously, and never under any circumstances to deny it. Hence all who are able to receive this Sacrament are in duty bound to do so.[12] Culpable neglect in this matter exposes one to great spiritual danger and is a mortal sin if inspired by formal contempt for the Sacrament or accompanied by grievous scandal, or when there is proximate danger of losing faith or charity.

Bishops are under a grave obligation of affording the faithful an opportunity to receive this

can. 743.—*Rit. Rom., De Sacr. Bapt.*, tit. 2, c. 1, n. 13.—The decree of the Holy Office of Jan. 11, 1899, already quoted, says: *"Tunc vero permitti poterit, ut obstetrix illum conferat, quando periculum positive timeatur, ne puer dilationis tempore sit moriturus."*—Cfr. J. B. Géniesse, *La Mort Réelle et la Mort Apparente et leurs Rapports avec l'Administration des Sacrements*, Paris 1906; J. Antonelli, *Medicina Pastoralis*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., Rome 1906, pp. 265 sqq.

10 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 760, 764. —*Rit. Rom., De Sacr. Bapt.*, tit. 2, c. 1, n. 25.—Cfr. C. Krieg, *Wissenschaft der Seelenleitung*, Vol. I, p. 110. Under the new Code no spiritual relationship is incurred by Baptism except between the baptizing minister and the person baptized, and between the latter and the sponsors (can. 768).

11 2 Tim. II, 3.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 72, art. 1 and 7.

12 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 787.

Sacrament at least once every five years.[13]

Each person confirmed ought to have a separate sponsor, whose obligations are similar to those assumed by the sponsor at Baptism.[14]

There is no obligation either to administer or to receive this Sacrament fasting, though, according to St. Thomas, "where it can conveniently be done, it is more becoming that both giver and receiver should be fasting." [15]

Readings.—*Rituale Romanum, De Sacro Baptismate.*—J. B. Géniesse, *La Mort Réel et la Mort Apparente et leurs Rapports avec l'Administration des Sacrements,* Paris 1906.—J. Antonelli, *Medicina Pastoralis,* Vol. I, 2nd ed., Rome 1906.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. I, pp. 238 sqq., 304 sqq.—Stöhr-Kannamüller, *Handbuch der Pastoralmedizin,* 4th ed., Freiburg 1900.—*Codex Iuris Canonici, De Baptismo,* can. 737–779; *De Confirmatione,* can. 780–800.—M. J. O'Donnell, "Baptism in the New Code," in the *Irish Eccles. Record,* 5th Series, Vol. X, No. 6, pp. 441 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., Comp. *Theol. Mor.,* pp. 534 sqq., 555 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 47 sqq., 67 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. III, pp. 62 sqq., 99 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.,* Vol. II, pp. 43 sqq., 70 sqq.

13 *Ibid.,* can. 785, § 3 sq.

14 *Codex Iuris Can.,* can. 794, 797.

15 *Summa Theol.,* 3a, qu. 72, art. 12, ad 2: "*Propter multitudinem fidelium et propter pericula imminentia sustinetur, ut hoc sacramentum, quod nonnisi ab episcopis dari potest, etiam a nonieiunis detur vel accipiatur, quia unus episcopus, praecipue in magna dioecesi, non sufficeret ad tot homines confirmandos, si eis tempus arctaretur. Ubi tamen congrue observari potest, convenientius est, ut a ieiunis detur et accipiatur.*"

SECTION 4

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Holy Eucharist is entitled to an important place in Moral Theology because it has been instituted as the spiritual food of the soul, as a means to avoid everyday sins, and as a pledge of eternal glory.[1] Christ instituted this Sacrament for the twofold purpose of transforming and ennobling human nature, and enabling men to advance on the way to righteousness and become intimately united with God. As Communion the Holy Eucharist is both the efficient cause and sign of a real and mystic union with Jesus Christ [2]—"the sacrament of ecclesiastical unity, which is brought about by many being one in Christ." [3] "From the Eucharist the martyrs

1 John VI, 50 sqq.—St. Ignatius (*Ep. ad Ephes.*, 20, 2) calls the Holy Eucharist "the medicine of immortality, the antidote that we should not die, but live forever in Christ." (Funk, *Patres Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 230).—*Rit. Rom.*, *De S. Euch. Sacr.*, tit. 4, c. 2, n. 6: *"O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur, recolitur memoria passionis eius, mens impletur gratiâ et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur."*

2 Cfr. John VI, 54; 1 Cor. X, 16 sq.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., pp. 218 sqq.; M. Heimbucher, *Die Wirkung der hl. Kommunion*, Ratisbon 1884.

3 *"Sacramentum unitatis ecclesiasticae, quae attenditur secundum hoc, quod multi sunt unum in Christo."* (St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 82, art. 2, ad 2).—St. Augustine exclaims: *"O sacramentum pietatis! O signum unitatis! O vinculum caritatis!"* (*Tr. in Ioa.*, 26, n. 13).

drew their strength, the virgins their zeal, the saints their courage." [4]

The nature and effects of this Sacrament give rise to the following obligations.

I. THE DUTY OF RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION.—Holy Communion is not necessary as a means of salvation (*necessitate medii*), but a divine precept imposes upon all who have attained the use of reason the duty of receiving the Eucharist if possible (*necessitas praecepti*).[5]

1. This duty is based on the same general reasons as that of receiving Confirmation, plus the additional one that Holy Communion is a food without which the supernatural life of the soul must needs grow weak or cease altogether. There can be no doubt that the divine precept of receiving the Holy Eucharist as viaticum [6] (when there is danger of death from whatever cause) obliges under pain of mortal sin, for Christ expressly declared: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you." [7]

In another place (*ibid.*, n. 14) he calls the Eucharist "*panis concordiae.*" Again he says: "*Fortes sunt martyres, firmi sunt martyres, sed panis confirmat cor hominis, panis qui de caelo descendit.*" (*Serm.*, 333, c. 1; Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1464).—Cfr. K. Adam, *Die Eucharistielehre des hl. Augustin*, Paderborn 1908.

4 Don Bosco.

5 Cfr. Luke XXII, 19; John VI, 54; 1 Cor. XI, 26.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, c. 2, can. 9; Sess. XXI, c. 4, can. 4 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 875, 891, 933, 937).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 73, art. 3; qu. 80, art. 11.

6 Τὸ τελευταῖον καὶ ἀναγκαιότατον ἐφόδιον.

7 John VI, 54.—*Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 864, § 1.—*Conc. Nicaen. I.*, can.

2. The duty with which we are concerned is inculcated by the well-known ecclesiastical precept which commands all the faithful who have attained the use of reason to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, during Easter time. This law, passed by the Fourth Council of the Lateran,[8] was at first purely disciplinary, but received dogmatic character at the Council of Trent.[9] The paschal precept must be regarded as an authentic interpretation of the divine command to eat the Body and Blood of the Lord. Needless to say, it can be fulfilled only by a *worthy* Communion.[10] If for some reason the precept is not complied with during the paschal season, it remains binding for the remainder of the ecclesiastical year, and if one foresees that he will be unable to perform his Easter duty within or after the prescribed time, he should try to attend to it in advance.[11]

13 (Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 417).—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, c. 8.—On the ancient custom of receiving Communion as viaticum see A. Struckmann, *Die Gegenwart Christi in der hl. Eucharistie*, Vienna 1905, pp. 210 sqq.

8 *Conc. Lat. IV.* (A. D. 1215), c. 21 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 437).

9 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, can. 9.—Cfr. J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Moralis*, Vol. II, n. 218 sq.—The new *Codex Iuris Can.* states the law of paschal Communion in the usual terms of our catechisms, but adds (can. 859, § 1): "*. . . nisi forte de consilio proprii sacerdotis, ob aliquam rationabilem causam, ad tempus ab eius perceptione duxerit abstinendum.*"

10 This has been indirectly defined by Innocent XI when he condemned the proposition: "*Praecepto communionis annuae satisfit per sacrilegam Domini manducationem.*" (*Prop. Damnat.*, n. 55; Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1205). The new *Codex Iuris Can.* expressly says (can. 861): "*Præcepto communionis recipiendae non satisfit per sacrilegam communionem.*"

11 Cfr. Koch-Preuss, *Handbook of*

The place for making the Easter Communion is the parish church. One who makes it elsewhere, under the new Code of Canon Law, is admonished to inform his pastor of the fact.[12]

II. Preparation for Communion.—The nature of the Holy Eucharist is such that it must be received with the greatest possible purity of soul and body.

1. Preparation of the Soul.—In order to receive Holy Communion worthily, the soul must be free from mortal sin.[13] Therefore, if one is conscious of a mortal sin, he must worthily receive the Sacrament of Penance before approaching the Holy Table. If he must communicate, and confession is impossible, he should at least make an act of perfect contrition. Mortal sins forgotten in a worthy confession should, if a good opportunity offers, be confessed before approaching the Holy Table. There is, however, no strict obligation to do so, and if one has no opportunity to confess, it will suffice to mention such sins in the next confession. To receive the

Moral Theology, Vol. I, p. 179.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Moral.*, l. VI, n. 297 sqq.

12 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 859, § 3: "*Suadendum est fidelibus ut huic praecepto [communionis paschalis] satisfaciant in sua quisque paroecia; et qui in aliena paroecia satisfecerint, curent proprium parochum de adimpleto praecepto certiorem facere.*"—On the history of this precept see A. Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church*, St. Louis 1915, pp. 210 sqq.

13 Cfr. 1 Cor. XI, 27 sqq.; *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, c. 7, can. 11 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 880, 893); Sess. XXII, *De Observ. et Evitand. in Celebrat. Missae.*—Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. ab Alexandro VII.*, n. 38 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1138).

Holy Eucharist while conscious of mortal sin is a very grievous sin, and the greatest of sacrileges, though, contrary to the opinion of many, by no means the most grievous sin a man can commit.[14]

As an immediate preparation for Holy Communion, acts of faith, hope, charity, adoration, desire, devotion, and humility should be elicited. All these acts may profitably be directed to Christ's sacrificial death on the cross.[15] A part of the preparation for Communion in the wider sense is the thanksgiving following its reception. This is a very important and effective means of preserving the graces obtained and of making them fruitful for the spiritual life. The thanksgiving after Communion should consist mainly in acts of adoration, humility, gratitude, love, and self-oblation,[16] and should contain some special petitions and resolutions.

2. Preparation of the Body.—On the part of the body the worthy reception of the Eucharist requires:

a) Cleanliness and a decent habiliment. Neglect of these requisites betrays a moral defect and

14 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 3a, qu. 80, art. 5; Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., pp. 268 sq.—On the participation of Judas in the Last Supper see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 81, art. 2; J. Belser, *Die Geschichte des Leidens und Sterbens des Herrn*, Freiburg 1903, pp. 162 sqq.

15 Cfr. Luke XXII, 19; 1 Cor. XI, 26; *Rit. Rom., De Euch. Sacr.*, tit. 4, c. 1, n. 4; F. S. Renz, *Die Geschichte des Messopferbegriffes*, Vol. I, pp. 115 sqq.

16 Cfr. P. Lejeune, *Avant et après la Communion*, Paris 1901.

is a violation of the respect due to the Sacrament and to Jesus Christ, who is present therein. Holy Communion must not, however, be denied to those who suffer from diseases which ordinarily involve physical uncleanness, *e. g.*, leprosy, smallpox, eczema, etc. The married are advised (though not commanded) to abstain from carnal intercourse immediately before and after Communion.[17] "Neither legitimate cohabitation nor a flow of blood nor seminal pollutions during sleep but only impious and illicit conduct can violate nature or expel the Holy Ghost." [18]

b) A second bodily requisite for the worthy reception of Communion is that the recipient be fasting. The Eucharistic fast, known as *ieiunium naturale,* consists in complete abstention from food and drink and everything that is ordinarily taken after the manner of food and drink (*per modum cibi et potus*) after midnight (*post mediam noctem*).[19] This law binds under pain of mortal sin and admits of no *parvitas*

17 Cfr. 1 Cor. VII, 5 sq.; *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 4, qu. 56; Innocent XI's Decree *"Quum ad Aures,"* Feb. 12, 1679 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1147); *Missale Rom., De Defect. in Celebr. Missae,* tit. 9, n. 5; Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 292 (*al.* 244 *De Temp.*), n. 3 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIX, 2298).

18 *Constit. Apost.*, VI, c. 27 (ed. Funk, Vol. I, p. 371); cfr. Struckmann, *Die Gegenwart Christi in der hl. Eucharistie,* pp. 207 sqq.; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 64, art. 3.

19 St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 54 (*al.* 118), n. 8: *"Placuit Spiritui Sancto, ut in honorem tanti Sacramenti in os christiani prius Dominicum corpus intraret, quam ceteri cibi; nam ideo per universum orbem mos iste servatur."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIII, 203). *Missale Rom., De Defect. in Celebr. Missae,* tit. 9, n. 1–4; *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 4, c. 1, n. 3.—St. Thomas says (*Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 80, art.

materiae. The term midnight is to be understood physically, not morally, but we are allowed to follow either standard or sidereal time.

The Eucharistic fast does not, however, bind those who are in danger of death, *i. e.*, who suffer from a disease in which the Holy Eucharist is given as viaticum (which may be done repeatedly in the course of the same illness[20]). Nor does it bind when there is danger of a profanation of the Sacrament by unbelievers, or of scandal or infamy, or when a priest is compelled to complete the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass after the Consecration, either because he has "consecrated" and consumed water instead of wine (in which case he is obliged to reconsecrate and consume both species) or, for good reason, the wine only, or because he is overcome by sudden illness or death. It is of precept to complete a Mass once it has proceeded beyond the consecration of the bread, and in case of necessity it may be done by one who is no longer fasting. If the priest who finishes a Mass in place of another has not yet said Mass himself, he is not allowed to say another Mass, *etiam ablutione non sumptâ,* unless he has the privilege of binating.[21]

The Eucharistic fast, finally, is not binding on in-

8, ad 5): *"Ecclesia Romana diem a media nocte incipit. Et ideo, si post mediam noctem aliquis sumpserit aliquid per modum cibi vel potus, non potest eadem die hoc sumere sacramentum; potest vero, si ante mediam noctem."*—The new *Codex Iuris Can.* reinforces the old law as follows (can. 858, § 1): *"Qui a media nocte ieiunium naturale non servaverit, nequit ad sanctissimam Eucharistiam admitti, nisi mortis urgeat periculum, aut necessitas impediendi irreverentiam in sacramentum."*

20 See the decision of the Holy Office of Sept. 7, 1897, and that of the S. Congregation of the Council, of Dec. 7, 1906.—*Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 858, § 2; 864, § 3.

21 *Missale Rom., De Defect. in Celebr. Missae*, tit. 10, n. 5.—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 287 sqq.

valids or on those who have been legitimately dispensed by the Pope. Invalids may receive Communion once or twice a week even if they are obliged to take some liquid food.[21]

III. Frequent Communion.—By frequent Communion (*communio frequens*) is understood the reception of the Holy Eucharist daily or at least several times a week.

1. There can be no doubt that frequent Communion agrees perfectly with the teaching and practice of the Church. St. Augustine says that, unless a man's sins are so great as to merit excommuniation, he should not deprive himself of the daily medicine of the Body of Christ.[22] The Council of Trent "admonishes, exhorts, begs, and beseeches . . . that all and each of those who bear the Christian name . . . would believe and venerate these sacred mysteries of [Christ's] Body and Blood with such constancy and firm-

21 *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 858, § 2.

22 St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 54 (*al.* 118), n. 4: "*Peccata, si tanta non sunt, ut excommunicandus quisque iudicetur, non se debet a quotidiana medicina Dominici corporis separare. . . . Faciat autem unusquisque, quod secundum fidem suam pie credit esse faciendum. . . . Nam et ille honorando non audet quotidie sumere, et ille honorando non audet ullo die praetermittere. Contemptum solum non vult cibus iste, sicut nec manna fastidium.*" (Migne, *Patr. Lat.*, XXXIII, 201 sq.)—Idem, *Serm.*, 227 (*al.* 83 *De Diversis*): "*Debetis* [*infantes*] *scire, quid accepistis, quid accepturi estis, quid quot die accipere debeatis.*" (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 1099).—Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 84 (*al.* 28 *De Verbis Domini*), n. 3: "*Accipe quotidie, quod quotidie tibi prosit; sic vive, ut quotidie merearis accipere. Qui non meretur quotidie accipere, non meretur post annum accipere.*" (*P. L.*, XXXIX, 1908 sq.).—The latter passage appears verbatim also in Pseudo-Ambrose, *De Sacram.*, l. V, n. 25 (*P. L.*, XVI, 452).

ness of faith, with such devotion of soul, with such piety and worship, as to be able frequently to receive that supersubstantial bread,"[23] which, according to the same holy Synod, is "an antidote whereby we may be freed from daily faults and preserved from mortal sins," "the spiritual food of our souls," by which we are "fed and strengthened."[24]

2. Since frequent Communion is so ardently desired by Jesus Christ and His Church, the way to the altar railing should be open to all the faithful without distinction of rank, class or condition. No one should be turned away who is in the state of grace and approaches the table of the Lord with a right intention. The right intention demanded by the Church consists in the desire to receive the Eucharist, not as a matter of habit, or out of vainglory or human respect, or for some other earthly motive, but for the purpose of pleasing God, of becoming more closely united with Him by charity, and of seeking this divine remedy for one's weaknesses and defects.[25]

23 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, c. 8; Sess. XXII, c. 6 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 882, 944).—Cfr. the decree of Innocent XI, "*Quum ad aures*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1147 sqq.); St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 80, art. 10; Lejeune, *La Pratique de la Sainte Communion*, Paris 1900; F. X. Godts, C.SS. R., *Exagérations Historiques et Théologiques concernant la Communion Quotidienne*, Roulers and Bruxelles, 1904; Ch. Madridius.—J. P. Bock, *De Frequenti Usu S. Eucharistiae Sacramenti*, Vienne 1909.

24 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, c. 2 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 875).—Cfr. *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 4, qu. 69; F. Meffert, *Der hl. Alfons*, pp. 253 sqq.

25 Decree of the S. Congr. of the Council, Dec. 20, 1905, "*Sacra Tri-*

The frequent reception of Holy Communion quite naturally entails certain demands upon the recipient.

While it would be presumptuous to set up absolute rules, we may safely say that

a) It is fitting that he who receives Communion daily be free from conscious attachment to (venial) sin and strive earnestly and sincerely after perfection. However, though it is highly desirable that daily and frequent communicants be free from venial sins, at least from those which are entirely voluntary, and also from all attachment to sin, it is sufficient if they avoid mortal sins and harbor the earnest intention to sin no more, for with such a purpose they will inevitably be weaned more and more from sin.

b) How often each one may go to Communion is a question to be decided by the confessor.[26] In admitting children to their first Communion, the parents and the confessor should be consulted, but the final decision rests with the pastor.[27]

In regard to frequent Communion two extremes must be avoided: (1) Jansenistic rigorism, which demands a high state of perfection, and (2) laxism, which regards the frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist as an infallible mark of predestination.[28]

dentina Synodus." The best English commentary on this decree is, *The Decree on Daily Communion*, by J. B. Ferreres, S.J., translated by H. Jimenez, S.J., London 1909.

26 Innocent XI's Decree "*Quum ad aures*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1147): "*Frequens ad sacram alimoniam percipiendam accessus confessariorum secreta cordis explorantium iudicio est relinquendus, qui ex conscientiarum puritate et frequentiae fructu et ad pietatem processu laicis negotiatoribus et coniugatis, quod prospicient eorum saluti profuturum, id illis praescribere debebunt.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1147).—Cfr. Leo XIII's Decree "*Quemadmodum omnium rerum humanarum,*" Dec. 17, 1890.

27 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 854, § 5.

28 *Prop. Damnat. ab Alex. VIII.*,

Since the promulgation of the decree "*Sancta Tridentina Synodus,*" Dec. 20, 1905, it is forbidden to engage in "contentious controversies" concerning the dispositions required for frequent and daily Communion.[29]

IV. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.—The duty of adoring Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is fulfilled, broadly speaking, by participating in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which is the acme and centre of our religion. The custom of offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in common on Sundays is as old as Christianity itself.[30] The duty of attending Mass on Sundays and holydays was enforced by ecclesiastical synods since the sixth century.[31] Under the present discipline this duty can be complied with in any church or in any public or semi-public oratory.[32] Pastors are bound to offer the Holy Sacrifice on every Sunday and holyday of obligation for the people under their charge.

Though the second commandment of the

Dec. 7, 1690, prop. 22: "*Sacrilegi sunt iudicandi, qui ius ad communionem percipiendum praetendunt, antequam condignam de delictis suis poenitentiam egerint.*"—Prop. 23: "*Similiter arcendi sunt a sacra communione, quibus nondum inest amor Dei purissimus et omnis mixtionis expers.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1313).—*Prop. Damnat. sub Innoc. XI.*, prop. 56: "*Frequens confessio et communio etiam in his, qui gentiliter vivunt, est nota praedestinationis.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1206).

29 Decree "*Sancta Tridentina Synodus,*" art. 9; Ferreres, *The Decree on Daily Communion*, p. 33.

30 Cfr. Justin Martyr, *Apolog.*, I, 65 sq.; Pliny, *Epist.*, X, 97; Tertullian, *De Fuga*, c. 14.

31 *Conc. Agath.*, A. D. 506, can. 47; cfr. the *Decretum Gratiani*, dist. 1, can. 64, *De Consecratione* (Friedberg's ed., Leipsic 1879, col. 1312).

32 Cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 280 sqq. —*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXII, *Decr. de Observandis;* Sess. XXIII, c. 1, *De Ref.*—*Codex Iuris Cano-*

Church merely establishes the general duty of hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation, particular individuals, because of special needs, may be bound to hear Mass more frequently.

Belief in the Real Presence of Christ and the signification and value of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as well as the oft-expressed desire of the Church, ought to induce every faithful Catholic to attend Mass whenever possible and to communicate sacramentally, or at least spiritually, by eliciting an ardent desire to be united with Christ and to be made worthy of the graces of Communion.[88] Special opportunities for worshipping our Eucharistic Lord are furnished by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the exposition of the Sacred Host during the Forty Hours' Devotion, the so-called Holy Hour, the Corpus Christi procession, and other celebrations.

Readings.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 3a, qu. 80, art. 1–11.—H. Noldin. S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 115 sqq. —P. Gasparri, *Tract. Can. de SS. Eucharistia*, 2 vols., Paris 1890. —Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. VI, 2nd ed., pp. 346 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, pp. 265 sqq., pp. 136 sqq.—M. Heimbucher, *Die Wirkung der hl. Kommunion*, Ratisbon 1884.—Labouré, *L'Eucharistie Centre de la Vie Chrétienne*, Paris 1899.—Leo XIII, Encyclical "*Mirae Caritatis*," May 28, 1902.—*Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 801–869.

nici, can. 859, § 3.—*Instructio Pastoralis Eystettensis*, 5th ed., Freiburg 1902, pp. 20 sqq.

88 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIII, c. 8; Sess. XXII, c. 6 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 882, 944).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 80, art. 1, ad 3.

SECTION 5

PENANCE

1. NECESSITY OF THIS SACRAMENT.—The Sacrament of Penance (*sacramentum poenitentiae sive reconciliationis*) is the normal means by which a Catholic who has committed mortal sin after Baptism can recover sanctifying grace. To receive this Sacrament, actually or at least in desire (*in re aut in voto*), is as necessary for persons guilty of mortal sin as Baptism is for those still in the state of original sin. This is but another way of saying that for all Christians guilty of mortal sin Penance is a necessary means of salvation (*necessitas medii*).[1] Christ has instituted this Sacrament for the forgiveness of sins, and hence perfect contrition without at least the *votum sacramenti* cannot justify a sinner, for contrition, to be truly perfect, must include the desire of employing the divinely ordained means of reconciliation, *i. e.*, the Sacrament of Penance.[2] Justly, therefore, is Penance called "the second plank after shipwreck." [3]

1 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 2, can. 6 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 895, 915); St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 84, art. 5.

2 Cfr. John XX, 21–23; *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 1 and 4 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 894, 897 sq.).

3 St. Jerome, *In Is.*, II, c. 3: "*Secunda post naufragium tabula est*

2. Duty of Receiving This Sacrament.—From the fact that Penance is by divine right necessary for all who have fallen into mortal sin, it follows that a Catholic is bound to receive this Sacrament—

a) When he has had the misfortune of committing a mortal sin. Consciously and voluntarily to remain in the state of mortal sin is incompatible with the virtue of charity towards God, shows contempt for grace, and runs counter to Christian self-love, because the sinner thereby incapacitates himself for the performance of any and all meritorious works and endangers his soul.[4] Hence it is advisable to go to confession as soon as possible after falling into mortal sin.[5]

All sins committed after Baptism are matter (*materia remota et removenda*) for Penance. Mortal sins alone are necessary matter (*materia*

et consolatio miseriarum, impietatem suam abscondere." (Migne, *P. L.*, XXIV, 65).—Idem, *Epist.*, 130 (*al.* 8), n. 9: "*Verum nos ignoremus poenitentiam, ne facile peccemus. Illa quasi secunda post naufragium miseris tabula sit, in virgine integra servetur navis. Aliud est quaerere, quod perdideris, aliud est possidere, quod nunquam amiseris.*" (*P. L.*, XXII, 1115).—Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, can. 2 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 912).—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 1.—Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, IV, dist. 14, p. 1.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 84, art. 6.—St. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, P. VI, c. 10 (ed. II, Vicetia, p. 531).—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, 2nd ed., p. 73.

4 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, can. 1 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 911).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 6, art. 5.

5 Cfr. St. Bonaventure, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 17, qu. 2, p. 2: "*Consilium tamen sanum credo, quod omnes, qui cadunt per mortale, quam citius possunt, confiteantur; non enim videtur vere contritus, qui tam longo tempore vulnus peccati portat occultum. . . . De talibus generaliter asserere, quod possunt usque ad Pascha differre, videtur mihi periculosum.*" (*Opera Omnia*, IV, 445 sq.).

necessaria). Therefore, one who is conscious of venial sins only, is not *per se* bound to receive the Sacrament, for venial sins can be expiated by other means besides Penance.[6] Nevertheless, venial sins are admissible and sufficient matter (*materia libera seu sufficiens*) for confession, and it is advisable to include them, as the Sacrament of Penance is the best and most efficacious means of obtaining forgiveness of them, for two reasons:—first, because men are easily deceived as to the character of certain sins, and, secondly, because Penance serves not merely to blot out sin and sanctify the soul, but also to instruct, console, and encourage the sinner, and thus aids him on the way to perfection.

A Catholic is furthermore bound to receive this Sacrament,

b) When he is laden with mortal sin and in danger of death, or when he is conscious of being in the state of mortal sin and wishes to receive a Sacrament of the living; or

c) When he is commanded to do so by an ecclesiastical precept (*iure ecclesiastico*). The Third Commandment of the Church says that every Catholic should worthily confess his sins at least once a year to a duly ordained priest.[7]

6 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 5, can. 6 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 899 sqq., 916); Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, 62 sq.—Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. III, 4th ed., p. 150.

7 See A. Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 151 sqq.

Of course, this binds only those who have committed mortal sin.[8] No definite time is assigned for the fulfillment of this obligation, but the Church recommends that it be done in Lent. As a rule the annual confession is made in connection with the prescribed paschal Communion. Frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance may be recommended as a most effective protection against sin and a powerful means of perfection.[9]

3. Requisites of Worthy Reception.—Penance is described by the Fathers as "a laborious Baptism."[10] As such it demands a larger measure of personal coöperation on the part of the recipient than any other Sacrament. Whoever wishes to receive this Sacrament worthily must practice the virtue of penance or repentance[11] and confess his mortal sins, or, as the case may be, one or more venial sins. More specifically, he must make an act of contrition coupled with a firm purpose of amendment (*contritio cordis*), confess his sins to a duly authorized priest (*confessio oris*), and accept and perform the satisfaction imposed (*satisfactio operis*). Not all of these conditions, however, are of equal importance. Actual satisfaction belongs merely to the integrity of the Sacrament, whereas contrition,

8 Slater, *Moral Theol.*, I, 576 sq.; *infra*, p. 152.

9 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 46. —Dom. Soto, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 18, qu. 1, art. 2.

10 See Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, p. 73.

11 Cfr. *op. cit.*, pp. 1 sqq.

confession, and absolution are of its very essence.[12]

The Catechism of Trent says: "In the general opinion of the pious, whatever of holiness, piety, and religion has been preserved in the Church in our times, through the boundless beneficence of God, is to be ascribed in a great measure to confession." [13] The same authority describes Penance as " this citadel, so to speak, of Christian virtue," and adds that, though sins are cancelled by perfect contrition, few can reach a sufficient degree of contrition, and consequently it was "necessary that the Lord, in His infinite mercy, should provide by some easier means for the common salvation of men; and this He did, in His admirable wisdom, when He gave to the Church the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." [14]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 3a, qu. 84–90.—P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den hl. Sakramenten*, pp. 535 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. VIII, 2nd ed., pp. 4 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, Penance, pp. 130 sqq.—F. X. Zenner, *Instructio Practica Confessarii*, Vienna 1857.—F. Lorinser, *Die Lehre von der Verwaltung des hl. Bussakramentes*, 2nd ed., Breslau 1883.—J. Reuter, S.J., *Neo-confessarius Practice Instructus*, 4th ed. by J. Müllendorf, Ratisbon 1906.—A. Tappehorn, *Anleitung zur Verwaltung des Bussakramentes*, 5th ed., Dülmen 1908.—D. Palmieri, *Tractatus de Poenitentia*, Rome 1879.

12 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 2 and 3, can. 4 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 895 sqq., 914).—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 20.—*Error. M. Lutheri damnat. a Leone X.*, prop. 5 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 745).—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, pp. 132 sqq.—B. Pascal, *Pensées*, P. I, a. 5, n. 8 (Vol. I, Paris 1812, pp. 194 sqq.).—J. A. Moehler, *Symbolism* (tr. Robertson), 5th ed., London 1906, pp. 223 sqq.—Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 349 sqq.

13 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 36 (*al.* 32); A. Kirchberger, *Der gläubige Protestant und die Beichte*, Innsbruck 1906.

14 *Cat. Rom.*, *ibid.*

ARTICLE 1

CONTRITION

1. Nature of Contrition.—Contrition (*contritio cordis*) is the most necessary constituent of Penance, both as a virtue and as a Sacrament,[1] for without contrition there can be no genuine repentance and no forgiveness.[2] The Council of Trent defines contrition as "a sorrow of the soul and a detestation for sin committed, with the purpose of not sinning for the future."[3] Hence contrition is essentially an act of the will, by which man renounces sin and determines to avoid it in future. The act of renunciation is called contrition in the strict sense (*contritio stricte dicta*), while the determination to avoid future sins is termed purpose of amendment (*propositum*).

Being an interior sorrow of the soul, contrition differs from that purely intellectual regret (*dolor intellectivus speculativus*) which consists

1 Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, pp. 1 sqq.; 72 sqq.

2 Joel II, 12 sq.—Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. sub Innoc. XI.*, prop. 60: "*Poenitenti habenti consuetudinem peccandi contra legem Dei, naturae aut ecclesiae, etsi emendationis spes nulla appareat, nec est neganda nec differenda absolutio, dummodo ore proferat, se dolere et proponere emendationem.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1210).

3 Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, cap. 4: "*Contritio, quae primum locum inter dictos poenitentis actus habet, animi dolor ac detestatio est de peccato commisso cum proposito non peccandi de cetero.*"—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 1, ad 1: "*Contritio est dolor pro peccatis assumptus cum proposito confitendi et satisfaciendi.*"

in a mere perception of the damnableness of sin, and also from the so-called *terror conscientiae, i. e.,* the fear with which conscience is smitten upon being convinced of iniquity.[4] Both these emotions may be present without a spark of genuine contrition.

The moral value of contrition, as a turning away from sin and a turning to God (*aversio a peccato et conversio ad Deum*), consists in its being an act of the will,[5] and consequently it need not be accompanied by sensible pain or grief, nor manifest itself by sighs and tears. Whilst there is such a thing as "tears of contrition," [6] sensible sorrow forms no constituent of genuine contrition, nor is its presence a sure proof thereof.

"As there are tears that indicate no deep emotion, so there is a sorrow without tears. As a rule, however, it is desirable that contrition should be manifested by outward signs. Such outward signs of internal sorrow for sin are technically known as *signa contritionis,* and divided into two classes, ordinary and extraordinary. The latter manifest themselves partly in an unusual stirring

4 *Conc. Trident.,* Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.,* can. 4: *"Si quis . . dixerit, duas tantum esse poenitentiae partes, terrores scilicet incussos conscientiae agnito peccato et fidem, anathema sit."—Conf. August.,* art. 12.—Möhler, *Symbolism,* pp. 124 sqq.; pp. 223.

5 *Cat. Rom.,* P. II, c. 5, qu. 24: *"Quod autem contritio dolore definita est, monendi sunt fideles, ne arbitrentur, eum dolorem corporis sensu percipi. Contritio enim est voluntatis actio."*—Cfr. *Conc. Trident.,* Sess. VI, c. 6 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 798).

6 Cfr. Ps. VI, 7; Matth. XXVI, 75; Luke VII, 44, 47.—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Serm.,* 351, c. 1: *"Sicut comes poenitentiae dolor est, ita lacrimae sunt testes doloris."* (Migne, *P. L.,* XXXIX, 1536).—*Cat. Rom.,* P. II, c. 5, qu. 28.

of the affections and partly in the making of special efforts to go to confession, seek advice, etc. Such extraordinary signs are of particular significance in the case of habitual sinners and *recidivi*, where ordinary signs fail." [7]

2. PROPERTIES OF CONTRITION.—Contrition may be perfect or imperfect.

Perfect contrition (*contritio caritate perfecta*, or simply *contritio*) is inspired by charity, *i. e.*, a perfect love of God as the supreme good for His own sake.

Imperfect contrition (*contritio imperfecta*), now technically called attrition (*attritio*), is sorrow inspired by some other supernatural motive, *e. g.*, fear of eternal punishment, repugnance to sin as an offense against Almighty God, regret at having lost divine grace and forfeited heaven, etc.[8]

As can be easily seen, the distinction between perfect and imperfect contrition is not based upon the degree of sorrow a man has for his sins, but upon the motives by which that sorrow is inspired; this distinction is specific rather than generic.

7 F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 212 sq.

8 Cfr. J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 318: "*Contritio duplex distinguitur:* (1) *perfecta, quae est detestatio peccati orta ex motivo speciali caritatis perfectae seu bonitatis Dei propter se summe dilecti;* (2) *imperfecta, seu attritio, quae est detestatio peccati orta ex alio motivo supernaturali, v. g. ex consideratione turpitudinis peccati vel ex metu inferni aut ex amore beatitudinis aeternae.*"—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 4 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 897 sq.).

Perfect contrition, coupled with a desire to receive the Sacrament of Penance (*contritio cum voto sacramenti*), is sufficient to effect the forgiveness of sins not merely in cases of necessity, or when it reaches the highest possible degree of intensity, but of itself and always. Imperfect contrition (attrition), on the other hand, can produce this effect only in connection with sacramental confession.[9] Hence perfect contrition is not an essential requisite of Penance, but attrition suffices for the valid reception of this Sacrament, provided, of course, that the penitent is resolved to sin no more and confidently trusts in the mercy of God.

However, though there is no obligation to make an act of perfect contrition in preparing for confession, the faithful should be exhorted to do so, to the best of their ability.

Broadly speaking it is safe to assume that imperfect contrition always includes an act of at least incipient love (*amor initialis*), while perfect contrition is rarely without an admixture of fear (*timor filialis*).[10]

9 *Conc. Trident.*, *l. c.*—Cfr. *Prop. Baii Damnat.*, prop. 31, 32, 70, 71 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1031, 1032, 1070, 1071).—Gury, *l. c.*, n. 335: "*Contritio perfecta hominem iustificat per se, etiam extra sacramentum poenitentiae.* (1) *Constat ex ratione, etenim contritio includit necessario caritatem perfectam; porro amare Deum perfecte est cum Deo coniungi, amor enim in unione consistit; porro coniunctio cum Deo necessario disiunctionem a peccato operatur, quum non possit quis unum extremum amplecti quin ab extremo opposito totaliter recedat. Ergo.* (2) *Constat ex Scriptura Sacra (Prv. viii, 17; Ioa. xiv, 21; 1 Pet. iv, 8). Contritio perfecta non remittit peccata mortalia seu hominem non iustificat nisi cum voto confessionis, peccata enim remitti non possunt nisi per medium a Christo institutum. . . . Sufficit autem votum implicitum, votum enim explicitum neque requiritur natura contritionis perfectae, utpote quae per se solam iustificare potest, neque ex praecepto divino, siquidem nullum ostendi potest.*"

10 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 6: "*In spem eriguntur illumque* [*Deum*] *tamquam omnis iustitiae fontem diligere incipiunt.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 798).—Cfr. J. E. Pruner, *Kath. Moraltheologie*, Vol. II, 3rd ed., p. 374.

For the valid reception of the Sacrament of Penance contrition (whether perfect or imperfect) should be:

a) Sincere or heart-felt, for else it would be sheer hypocrisy. The quality of sincerity flows as a necessary effect from the nature of contrition.

b) Supernatural, both in its origin and in its motives. True contrition owes its existence to divine grace and is based upon reasons or motives supplied by supernatural faith.[11]

c) Supreme or sovereign, not in intensity but appreciatively, *i. e.*, the penitent must detest sin as the greatest of all evils and be ready to give up everything he has, even life itself, rather than offend God.[12] Since contrition is in the will, not in the emotions, it may happen that the sorrow one feels at temporal misfortunes is both affectively and intensively greater than that felt at sin as a purely spiritual evil; but this need not prevent a man's contrition from being appreciatively supreme. "If we may not succeed in rendering our contrition perfect," says the Roman Catechism, "it may nevertheless be true and efficacious, for oftentimes things that fall under the senses affect us more than spiritual things, and hence some persons experience a greater sense of grief for the loss of their children than for the baseness of their sins." [13] Our sense of grief need not

11 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 3 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 813).— Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. sub Innoc. XI.*, prop. 57: "*Probabile est, sufficere attritionem naturalem modo honestam.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1207).

12 Cfr. J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 328: "*Summa, i. e., ut peccator detestetur crimen suum plus quam omne aliud malum, et malit omnia perdere et pati, quam peccatum patrare. Etenim conversio ad Deum debet esse totalis, quum peccatum sit aversio totalis, sed non esset totalis, nisi esset summa, immo nulla foret, nam homo adhaereret adhuc creaturae, quum eam adhuc Deo anteponeret.*"

13 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 28: "*Quamquam si id minus consequi nobis liceat, ut perfecta sit, vera tamen et efficax contritio esse potest. Saepe enim usu venit, ut quae sen-*

be supreme, for to make it so is largely beyond our control; but we must by a combined act of the mind and will abhor sin above all other evils. Theologians express this technically by saying that sin must be detested as the greatest of all evils, not affectively, but effectively[14] (*non affective sed effective*).

d) Contrition must furthermore be universal, *i. e.*, it must cover all the mortal sins committed by the penitent. As every mortal sin implies a complete turning away from God, no one mortal sin can be forgiven without the rest.[15]

It is not, however, necessary to make a special act of contrition for each particular mortal sin. One general act for all the sins committed (*universe*) will suffice.

Venial sins can be forgiven severally, one without the other, and hence it suffices to make an act of contrition for one. When many venial sins are confessed, it is advisable to elicit a more specific contrition for the one or other of them, because a too general contrition might lack sincerity and efficaciousness.[16] To receive sacramental absolution from a venial sin it is necessary to have at least imperfect contrition for that particular offence.

Being the proximate matter of Penance, contrition must be brought into moral connexion with the Sacra-

sibus subiecta sunt, magis quam spiritualia nos afficiant. Quare nonnulli interdum maiorem ex filiorum obitu, quam ex peccati turpitudine doloris sensum capiunt."

14 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 3, art. 1–2.

15 Cfr. Gury, *op. cit.*, n. 328: "*Universalis, i. e., excludere debet omnia peccata gravia, saltem implicite vel ex motivo universali unico aut ex pluribus motivis particularibus, quae, saltem simul sumpta, se extendant ad omnia mortalia commissa, etiam memoriae non occurrentia. Ratio est, quia nullum peccatum actuale remittitur sine dolore, unum autem mortale sine alio remitti nequit, quum remissio fiat infusione gratiae, quae cum nullo mortali simul stare potest.*"—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 86, ad 3.

16 Cfr. *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 29 sq.; St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 433, 438.

ment, *i. e.,* it must precede the sacramental absolution or be present in the soul while the formula of absolution is pronounced by the priest. The best way is to make an act of contrition before entering the confessional.

Readings.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. III, pp. 132 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae,* Vol. VII, 2nd ed., pp. 39 sqq.—R. Schultes, O.P., *Reue und Bussakrament,* Paderborn 1907.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. III, pp. 296 sqq.

ARTICLE 2

THE PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT

1. Definition.—Genuine contrition, whether perfect or imperfect, must be accompanied by a firm purpose to amend one's life and to avoid future sins (*propositum non peccandi de cetero*). This truth may be deduced from the very nature of contrition, which, being a detestation of sin as an offense against God, must include both an act of sorrow for past sins (*de praeterito*) and the resolution not to sin again (*de futuro*).

The purpose of amendment which is included in contrition may be either explicit (*propositum explicitum sive formale*) or implicit (*propositum implicitum sive virtuale*). It is explicit when the penitent expressly thinks of the future and resolves never to sin again; it is implicit if he merely hates sin for fear or love of God, without eliciting a formal act of the will not to sin in fu-

ture. A good resolution of the latter kind is called virtual.[1]

The resolution to avoid sin and its proximate occasions for a supernatural motive is an indispensable condition of the valid reception of Penance. The controverted question whether the Sacrament requires an explicit (formal) resolution, or whether an implicit (virtual) purpose of amendment suffices, may theoretically be decided in favor of the latter opinion, though *in praxi* it is always better to choose the *pars tutior, i. e.*, to give explicit consideration to the necessity of amending one's life and make a formal resolution to do so. A really contrite penitent will hardly ever fail to make an explicit purpose of amendment.[2]

2. PROPERTIES.—The purpose of amendment, being an essential part of contrition, is as necessary for the valid reception of Penance as con-

1 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 342: *"Propositum est vera voluntas non amplius peccandi de cetero. Duplex est:* (1) *explicitum seu formale, quo quis, de futuro cogitans, statuit non amplius peccare;* (2) *implicitum seu virtuale, quod in ipsa contritione includitur, quin futurum tempus prae oculis habeatur."* —Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 4: *"Propositum non peccandi de cetero. . . . Cessatio a peccato et vitae novae propositum et inchoatio."* (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 897).

2 Gury, *op. cit.*, n. 345: *"An requiratur propositum explicitum in contritione? Triplex sententia datur: Ia sententia communior et valde probabilior negat, quia propositum cum tota eius efficacia includitur in vera contritione; ergo propositum implicitum sufficere debet ad valorem sacramenti, dummodo dolor eliciatur ex motivo universali; IIa sententia affirmat, quia, licet dolor includat necessario propositum, attamen propositum explicitum requiritur a Tridentino dicente in definitione contritionis: cum proposito non peccandi de cetero; IIIa sententia distinguit. Tenet non requiri propositum explicitum, si poenitens non cogitet de futuro, ut contingit moribundis; secus si ad futurum advertat. In praxi tutior sententia sequenda est ob auctoritatem theologorum, qui necessitatem propositi explicite adstruunt, quamvis speculative loquendo id parum probabile videatur. Ceterum rarissime eveniat, ut poenitentes vere contriti propositum etiam explicitum omittant."*—Cfr. Noldin, Vol. III, pp. 312 sq.

trition itself, and consequently, like the latter, and for the same reasons, must be:

a) Universal (*propositum universale*), *i. e.*, it must comprise all mortal sins which one might possibly commit in future and, in a general way, the lessening of venial sins.[3] If none but venial sins form the matter of confession, it is sufficient to resolve to avoid at least one of them, or to diminish the total number.[4]

b) The purpose of amendment must be firm, *i. e.*, the penitent must be determined to suffer any hardship rather than again offend God by a mortal sin.[5] Distrust of one's strength or fear of relapse do not impair the firmness of purpose which a sinner must have to amend his life. All that is required is that he humbly trust in God and be firmly determined to coöperate with divine grace in fighting temptations.[6] Actual re-

3 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 87, art. 1, ad 1: *"Homo in gratia constitutus potest vitare omnia peccata mortalia et singula; potest etiam vitare singula peccata venialia, sed non omnia. . . . Et ideo poenitentia de peccatis mortalibus requirit, quod homo proponat abstinere ab omnibus et singulis peccatis mortalibus, sed ad poenitentiam peccatorum venialium requiritur, quod homo proponat abstinere a singulis, non tamen ab omnibus, quia hoc infirmitas huius vitae non patitur; debet tamen habere propositum se praeparandi ad peccata venialia minuenda, alioquin esset ei periculum deficiendi, quum desereret appetitum proficiendi seu tollendi impedimenta spiritualis profectus, quae sunt peccata venialia."*

4 Cfr. J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, n. 344, 347.

5 *Ibid.*, n. 34: *"Poenitens habere debet voluntatem omnino determinatam non relabendi in peccatum, non obstante quocunque incommodo aut timore humano, secus enim non vellet totaliter et sincere ad Deum converti."*

6 *Op. cit.*, n. 346: *"An censeri debeat firmum propositum illius, qui habet quidem animum non peccandi, sed credit certo se relapsurum? R. Neg., quia practice loquendo, ille, qui vere vult non peccare, a peccato*

lapse is not always a sign that one's purpose of amendment lacked firmness; for even the strongest resolution may weaken and finally succumb.[7] But when the relapsed penitent has made no effort, or only the weakest kind of an effort, to amend his life, it may reasonably be presumed that he had no firm purpose of amendment.

c) Since the purpose of amendment is essentially an act of the will directed to future performance, it must be efficacious (*propositum efficax*), that is to say, the penitent must be ready and willing to employ the means necessary and useful for the avoidance of sin, particularly to shun all voluntary proximate occasions[8] and to

abstinere potest. Ergo, si credat, certo se lapsurum, hoc arguit infirmitatem propositi, aderit enim semper divina gratia, quacum sperare debet, se non relapsurum esse. Non tamen indispositus censendus est, qui ex praeterita fragilitate lapsum pertimescit. Hinc verum habet propositum poenitens ille, qui interroganti confessario de voluntate non peccandi respondet: 'Fragilis sum valde, formido lapsum, non tamen volo nunc casum.' In praxi vero indolem geniumque poenitentis inspicias. Reperies enim non raro peccatores asseverantes se relapsuros esse, qui timent, ne propositum satis firmum habeant, quin tamen aliud ostendant praeter labendi timorem suique diffidentiam. Huiusmodi poenitentibus dicendum est, non agi de his, quae forte probabiliter evenient, sed de actuali voluntate futurum respiciente et de fiducia summa in auxilio divino reponenda."

7 Cfr. Matth. XXVI, 33-35; 69-75.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 84, art. 10, ad 4: "*Quod aliquis postea peccat, vel actu vel proposito, non excludit, quin prima poenitentia vera fuerit, nunquam enim veritas prioris actus excluditur per actum contrarium subsequentem. Sicut enim vere cucurrit, qui postea sedet, ita vere poenituit, qui postea peccat.*"

8 Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 344: "*Efficax* [*propositum*], *seu poenitens non tantum firmiter statuere debet non amplius peccare velle, sed etiam adhibere operam et omnia media necessaria pro vitandis peccatis fugiendisque proximis occasionibus,*" etc. "*Sufficit autem, ut propositum sit efficax affective, id est, sufficit, ut peccator sit animo paratus ad media necessaria adhibenda, quia futura vitatio peccati non est de essentia propositi.*"

repair to the best of his ability whatever injury he may have done to others.

The purpose of amendment which forms part of contrition is of great importance for the spiritual life because there can be no progress on the way to perfection unless one has a straight purpose and keeps it. Thomas à Kempis says: "According to our resolution the course of our progress shall be; and he who would advance rapidly needeth great diligence. For if a man who maketh a firm resolution often faileth, how will *he* fare who hath seldom or never any fixed purpose? In many ways, however, we abandon our good resolve; and a slight omission of our exercises seldom passeth without some detriment to our progress. The good resolutions of the just depend not so much on their own wisdom, as on the grace of God, in whom they also ever trust in all their undertakings. For man proposeth, but God disposeth; and 'the way of a man is not His.'"[9] "Good resolutions," says Alban Stolz, "are like blossoms that drop from a tree; they bring no fruit unless a man employs the means necessary to carry them out."

READINGS.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 310 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *Manual of Moral Theol.*, Vol. II, pp. 161 sq.—A Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 231 sqq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Past.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 77 sqq.

9 *De Imit. Christi*, I, 19 (*Opera Omnia*, ed. Pohl, II, 32 sq.). Our translation is that of the "Seraphic Edition," by Father Thaddeus, O.F.M., London 1908, pp. 34 sq.

ARTICLE 3

CONFESSION

I. Necessity.—The second essential constituent of the Sacrament of Penance is confession. By confession (*confessio*, ἐξομολόγησις)[1] we understand the sorrowful declaration of sins made to a priest with the purpose of obtaining forgiveness through the power of the keys.[2]

Sacramental confession is of divine institution and has been embodied among the commandments of the Church.[3]

Every Catholic who has attained to the use of reason, *i. e.*, who is able to distinguish between good and evil, and has sinned grievously, is obliged to confess his sins once a year (*annua confessio*).[4] Not age, but intellectual and moral

1 *Conc. Florent., Decretum pro Armenis: "Secunda* [*pars poenitentiae*] *est oris confessio: ad quam pertinet, ut peccator omnia peccata, quorum memoriam habet, suo sacerdoti confiteatur integraliter.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 699).

2 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 33: "*Eam . . .* [*confessionem*] *definiunt esse peccatorum accusationem, quae ad Sacramenti genus pertinet, eo susceptam, ut veniam virtute clavium impetremus. Recte autem accusatio dicitur, quod peccata ita commemoranda non sunt, quasi scelera nostra ostentemus, ut ii faciunt, qui 'laetantur, quum malefecerint'* (Prov. ii, 14), *aut omnino enarranda, ut rem aliquam gestam otiosis auditoribus delectandi causâ exponamus. Verum accusatorio animo ita enumeranda sunt, ut ea etiam in nobis vindicare cupiamus. Veniae autem impetrandae causâ peccata confitemur, quoniam hoc iudicium longe dissimile est forensibus capitalium rerum quaestionibus, in quibus confessioni poena et supplicium, non culpae liberatio et errati venia constituta est.*" (Ed. Ratisb. 4a, p. 225). Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, pp. 181 sqq.

3 Cfr. John XX, 21 sqq.—*Conc. Trid.*, Sess. VI, ch. 14; Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 5, can. 6–8.

4 *Conc. Lat. IV.*, c. 21: "*Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis, postquam ad annos discretionis pervenerit, . . .*

development is the decisive factor in regard to this obligation. Of course, the precept of annual confession binds only those who have committed a mortal sin. Those who are guilty of venial sins only are not strictly obliged to go to confession at all.[5] Because of the danger of self-deception, however, and particularly on account of the respect due to the law of Easter Communion, every Catholic is advised to go to confession at least once a year, even though he be not conscious of mortal sin.

The obligation imposed by the precept of annual confession is not *ad finiendam,* but *ad urgendam obligationem.* Hence if a man surely foresees that he will not be able to comply with his duty later in the year, he is bound to do it now.

Sacramental confession, to be valid, must be made to the appointed priest in person, not by letter, telephone

fideliter confiteatur. . . ." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 437).—*Cat. Rom.,* P. II, c. 5, qu. 38: "*. . . perspicitur, neminem confessionis lege adstrictum esse ante eam aetatem, quâ rationis usum habere potest. Neque tamen ea aetas certe aliquo annorum numero definita est, sed illud universe statuendum videtur: ab eo tempore confessionem puero indictam esse, quum inter bonum et malum discernendi vim habet, in eiusque mentem dolus cadere potest. Nam quum ad id vitae tempus quisque pervenerit, in quo de salute aeterna deliberandum est, tum primum sacerdoti peccata confiteri debet; quum aliter salutem sperare nemini liceat, qui scelerum conscientiâ premitur.*" (Ed. Ratisb. 4a, p. 228).

5 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.,* l. VI, n. 667: "*Quaeritur an ad satisfaciendum praecepto annuae confessionis, qui non habet mortalia, teneatur confiteri venialia. Prima sententia affirmat. Secunda sententia tamen communis et verior negat. Ratio, quia Ecclesia praecipiendo confessionem annuam tantum illam confessionem praecipit, quae est debita ex Christi institutione. Christus autem nullam aliam praecipit confessionem nisi mortalium.*"—*Supra,* p. 138.

or messenger.[6] The personal presence of the penitent is required even when oral confession is impracticable because the penitent is deaf or can speak no language known to the confessor. In the former case the avowal can be made by means of signs or in writing, in the latter, through an interpreter. In case of necessity, when oral confession is impossible, the penitent may manifest by signs the nature of his sins, his sorrow for them, and his wish to be absolved.[6a]

II. PROPERTIES.—The properties of confession flow from the nature and purpose of the Sacrament. They are: (1) Integrity, (2) Sincerity, and (3) Clearness.[7]

1. INTEGRITY.—Confession is entire or complete if the penitent avows all the mortal sins he has committed since Baptism or his last previous confession, together with their number and spe-

6 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 9, art. 3; Decree of Clement VIII, June 20, 1602; Declaration of Paul V, July 14, 1605 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 962, 963); *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 45.—To the query whether absolution given by telephone (*per telephonium*) would be valid, and, in case of necessity, licit, the S. Congregation of the Penitentiary replied: "*Nihil esse respondendum*" (July 1, 1884). —Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, pp. 98 sqq.

6a No one is obliged to confess either in writing or through an interpreter. Cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 318 sqq.

7 St. Thomas mentions no less than sixteen, but they can all be reduced to the three mentioned in the text:

"*Sit simplex, humilis, confessio, pura, fidelis,*
Atque frequens, nuda, discreta, libens, verecunda,
Integra, secreta, lacrimabilis, accelerata,
Fortis et accusans, et sit parere parata."

Th. M. J. Gousset (*Theol. Mor.*, II, 256) enumerates four: *integritas, simplicitas, humilitas, caritas.* Gury (*Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 352) thinks that only two of these qualities are essential: "*Multae confessionis dotes a variis auctoribus assignantur, nempe ut sit integra, dolorosa, humilis, prudens, simplex, nuda, verecunda, brevis, secreta et vocalis. Ex his confessionis dotibus duae priores tantum sunt essentiales, reliquae pertinent ad eius mo-*

cific circumstances.[8] To be able to do this properly he must examine his conscience.

The integrity of confession (*integritas confessionis*) may be material or formal. It is material (*integritas materialis*) if the penitent actually confesses all his mortal sins; it is formal (*integritas formalis*) if he is willing to make a complete avowal, but is prevented by physical or moral causes.

a) The material integrity of confession requires:

α) That the penitent mention all those mortal sins which he has not yet validly confessed. When he is in doubt whether or not he has confessed a mortal sin, or whether some particular sin is mortal or venial, the penitent is not bound, but (cases of scrupulousness and urgent necessity excepted) earnestly advised to mention it. If the existing doubt is founded on weighty reasons (*dubium prudens*), it is advisable that the sin (*peccatum dubium*) be confessed. Mortal sins which have been inadvertently omitted (forgotten) in one confession, must be declared in the next. If a penitent has purposely concealed a mortal sin, his confession is invalid, and he must, besides confessing his sacrilege, repeat all the mortal sins mentioned

dum et perfectionem nec speciali explicatione indigent."

8 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 5, can. 7; *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 40 sq.

in his invalid confession, unless the confessor has at least a dim recollection of them.

β) That the number of mortal sins committed be given as accurately as possible. If the exact number cannot be ascertained, it is sufficient to give an approximate estimate, declaring, for instance, how many times the sin has been committed each day, week, or month.

γ) That the circumstances be mentioned which change the species of a sin or add a new species (*circumstantiae speciem mutantes vel addentes*), and especially those by which a venial sin becomes grievous (*e. g.*, scandal). Circumstances that merely increase the guilt of a sin within the same species (*circumstantiae notabiliter aggravantes*) as a rule need not be confessed, though it is advisable to do so. They must be expressly mentioned if they entail a censure or reservation, or if the confessor inquires about them with a view to ascertaining the disposition of the penitent or deciding whether restitution has to be made.[9]

Circumstances which might change an objectively grievous sin (*i. e.*, one that is grievous merely from its object) into a venial sin should also be mentioned. This is not necessary for the integrity of the Sacrament, but advisable because it may enable the confessor to form a better idea of the penitent's state of mind.

9 Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. sub Innoc. XI.*, prop. 58: "*Non tenemur confessario interroganti fateri peccati alicuius consuetudinem.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1208).

The mortal sins a man has committed, together with their number and specific circumstances, constitute the necessary matter of Penance (*materia necessaria*). Venial sins are merely *materia libera et sufficiens*, that is to say, they need not be, but may and, considering the importance of the Sacrament, should be confessed. Previously confessed sins, whether mortal or venial, may be confessed again, and if properly regretted, constitute sufficient matter for absolution. All "the other sins, which do not occur [to the penitent] after diligent thought, are understood to be included as a whole in that same confession," and are summarily included in the usual declaration: "For these and all other sins of which I am not now conscious, I am heartily sorry," and so forth.[10]

In order to be able to confess his sins properly, the penitent, before approaching the sacred tribunal, should carefully and earnestly examine his conscience.[11] No time limit can be set for this important task. Circumstances of individuality, time, place, etc., must be taken into consideration. The only general rule that may be laid down is that the time and care devoted to the examination of conscience should be equal to that which is usually bestowed by prudent men upon important matters of business, and that there be no exaggeration or carelessness, lest the validity of the Sacrament be endangered and it become what Protestants have unjustly called it,—a "slaughter-house of consciences."

Material integrity of confession in the strict sense is

10 *"Reliqua peccata, quae diligenter cogitanti non occurrunt, in universum eadem confessione inclusa esse intelleguntur."—Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 5; cfr. Ps. XVIII, 13.

11 *"Diligens sui discussio aut debita et diligens praemeditatio."* (*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 5, can. 7).—Cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 339 sqq.

not always possible because God alone knows the hearts of men and can judge them infallibly.[12]

b) Confession is formally complete or entire if the penitent tells all the sins he is able to remember and confess, thereby proving his willingness to make a full avowal.

The obstacles to material integrity are partly physical and partly moral. Physical obstacles are, *e. g.*, deafness or inability to speak, impossibility of finding a confessor who understands one's language, immediate danger of death, inculpable ignorance or forgetfulness. Moral obstacles are: extraordinary difficulty, grave spiritual or temporal injury threatening the penitent, the confessor, or a third person; *e. g.*, the danger of losing one's good name (not, however, before the confessor), serious scandal, violation of the seal, etc. Such obstacles dispense from material integrity, provided, of course, it is morally impossible for the penitent to wait or to find another priest to whom he could make a full confession. Physical exertion, crowding of the confessionals,[13] intense shame[14] or the necessity of indirectly revealing an ac-

12 Acts I, 24; XV, 8; 1 Cor. IV, 4.

13 The following proposition was condemned under Innocent XI: *"Licet sacramentaliter absolvere dimidiate tantum confessos ratione magni concursus poenitentium, qualis verbi gratia potest contingere in die magnae alicuius festivitatis aut indulgentiae."* (*Prop. Damnat. sub Innoc. XI.*, prop. 59; Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1209).

14 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 5: *"Ipsa vero huiusmodi confessionis difficultas ac peccata detegendi verecundia gravis quidem videri posset, nisi tot tantisque commodis et consolationibus levaretur, quae omnibus digne ad hoc Sacramentum accedentibus per absolutionem certissime conferuntur."*—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol., Mor.*, II, n. 377: *"Nunquam excusat difficultas ipsi confessioni intrinseca, quantumvis gravis ea sit. Ratio est, quia confessio ex naturâ suâ est essentialiter laboriosa, ac proinde, si difficultas gravis, v. g.*

complice do not excuse a penitent from making a full confession of his sins.

Under no pretext is the confessor permitted to inquire formally for the name of an accomplice or associate in crime (*complex peccati aut socius criminis*), his place of residence,[15] or any circumstance that might reveal his identity. Nay, more, the penitent should not be allowed to disclose the name of his accomplice because confessor and penitent are both under obligation to protect the good name of others. But the penitent must divulge the degree of relationship of his accomplice if this is rendered necessary by some circumstance changing the species of his sin, *e. g.*, incest, and the fact that a priest is involved when the confessional has been abused for soliciting to impurity. The laws of the Church require that a priest guilty of this crime be reported by name to the ecclesiastical authorities. If a penitent can, without great inconvenience, choose a confessor to whom his accomplice is unknown, he is in duty bound to do so.[16]

If for some physical or moral reason the penitent has forgotten or otherwise omitted a mortal sin in confession, he must mention it in his next confession,—not to obtain forgiveness (as such sin has been forgiven indirectly by the grace of absolution), but to submit the forgotten sin formally to the power of the keys.[17]

magna repugnantia aut verecundia, ab integritate excusaret, plerumque ab accusandis mortalibus excusarentur fideles, et proinde rueret ex maximâ parte institutio sacramenti poenitentiae. Praeterea Ecclesia non posset reservare crimina atrocia, quia id incommodum non leve poenitentibus creat."

15 Benedict XIV., *Const.* "*Suprema omnium,*" July 7, 1745; "*Ubi primum,*" June 2, 1746; "*Ad eradicandum,*" Sept. 28, 1746; "*Apostolici ministerii,*" Dec. 9, 1749 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1474).—Cfr. Gury, II, 379, 382.

16 Cfr. Göpfert, III, 235 sqq.—Noldin, III, 338 sq.

17 Gury, II, n. 377: "*Cessante causâ excusante ab integritate materiali, praeceptum divinum confitendi omnia peccata mortalia omissa iterum urget, etiam excusatio a divina confessionis lege non cessat*

The assertion of a recent Protestant writer that the Church in the Middle Ages compelled the faithful to "confess each and every sin they had committed" is false.[18]

2. SINCERITY.—The second quality required for a valid confession is sincerity. Confession is sincere (*fidelis aut sincera*) if the penitent truthfully declares all his mortal sins with their number and specific circumstances. Any wilful attempt to misrepresent seriously the nature of a mortal sin committed, or the moral state of the soul, is sacrilegious and renders confession invalid, because such an act not only destroys the integrity of confession, but is incompatible with true contrition, and, moreover, makes it impossible for the confessor to judge his penitent properly.

3. CLEARNESS.—Confession must be clear, that is, the penitent must declare his sins so as to enable the confessor to understand him perfectly

simpliciter occurrente impedimento, sed tantum suspenditur. Cessante igitur causâ excusante, obligatio legis integre reviviscit, praeceptum enim confessionis non est affixum ad tempus, nec ad circumstantiam, sed vitam integram afficit, ita ut peccata nondum accusata postea necessario accusanda sint, si fieri possit. Nec obstat, quod Ecclesia tempus confessionis determinaverit, nam haec determinatio non est ad finiendam, sed ad urgendam obligationem. Constat aliunde ex propositione ab Alexandro VII. damnata, quae sic iacet: 'Peccata in confessione omissa seu oblita ob instans periculum vitae aut ob aliam causam non tenemur in sequenti confessione exprimere.' [Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1111]. *Ergo contradictoria huius propositionis est vera: ergo necessario accusanda sunt peccata oblivione praetermissa, licet iam deleta fuerint.*"

18 Cfr. E. Fischer, *Zur Geschichte der evangelischen Beichte*, Vol. I, pp. 24, 34, 47; P. A. Kirsch, *Zur Geschichte der katholischen Beichte*, pp. 186 sqq.

and to form a correct opinion of the state of his soul. The nature of the Sacrament requires that the avowal of sins be made simply, clearly, humbly, and contritely, for it is essentially an act of self-accusation, by which the penitent expects to obtain forgiveness and grace through the power of the keys confided by Christ to His Church.[19] Needless to add, it requires courage and mortification to make a complete, sincere, and clear confession.[20]

Regarding the *form* of sacramental confession, the Catechism of the Council of Trent says: "We must take care that our confession be plain, simple, and undisguised, not clothed in that artificial language which some employ, who seem rather to give an outline of their manner of life than to confess their sins; for our confession should be such as to disclose ourselves to the priest as we know ourselves to be, representing as certain that which is certain, and as doubtful that which is doubtful. This good quality our confession obviously lacks if our sins

19 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 38: "*Accusatorio animo* [*peccata*] *ita enumeranda sunt, ut ea etiam in nobis vindicare cupiamus.*"

20 St. Ambrose, *Apol. Proph. David*, I, c. 4, n. 15: "*Peccavit David, quod solent reges, sed poenitentiam gessit, flevit, ingemuit, quod non solent reges. Confessus est culpam, obsecravit indulgentiam, humi stratus deploravit aerumnam, ieiunavit, oravit, confessionis suae testimonium in perpetua saecula vulgato dolore transmisit. Quod erubescunt facere privati, rex non erubuit confiteri. Qui tenentur legibus, audent suum negare peccatum, dedignantur rogare indulgentiam, quam petebat, qui nullis legibus tenebatur humanis. Quod peccavit, conditionis est, quod supplicavit, correctionis. Culpam itaque incidisse naturae est, diluisse virtutis.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XIV, 857).—Idem, *ibid.*, II, c. 3, n. 7: "*Peccavit David, quod solent reges, sed poenitentiam gessit et flevit, quod non solent reges. Rogavit veniam non arrogans potestatis, sed infirmitatis suae conscius; prostratus in terram cilicio se operuit, oblitus imperii et memor culpae.*" (*P. L.*, XIV, 890).

are not enumerated or if topics are introduced that are foreign to the matter of confession. They who, in explaining things, observe prudence and modesty, are also very much to be commended, for a superfluity of words is to be avoided, but whatever is necessary to make known the nature and quality of every sin, is to be explained briefly and modestly."[21]

One who is morally certain that he has made an unworthy confession, must confess the same sins again.

The term *general confession* has two meanings: (1) a declaration of guilt in general terms, as contained, *e. g.*, in the *Confiteor;* (2) a confession in which the penitent repeats all or some of his former confessions.

A general confession in the last-mentioned sense may extend over one's whole life or some particular period thereof.

A general confession becomes necessary when former confessions were sacrilegious, either through want of sincerity, sorrow, resolution, or integrity, or through grave negligence in the examination of conscience, etc. A general confession is useful, though not necessary, at the beginning of each new epoch in life, *e. g.*, in preparing for first Communion or on entering a new state of life, in a dangerous illness, at the time of a jubilee or mission. Scrupulants should be dissuaded from making frequent general confessions, as this practice is apt to aggravate rather than improve their condition.[22]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 6–10.—J. P. Gury, *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. II, n. 348–401.—P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den hl. Sakramenten,* pp. 498 sqq., 564 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae,* Vol.

21 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 43 (ed. 4a Ratisb., p. 230).

22 Cfr. Gury, II, n. 393–401; M. Haringer, *Anleitung zur Verwaltung des hl. Bussakramentes,* pp. 210 sqq.

VII, 3rd ed., pp. 76 sqq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 82 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 315 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 238 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, pp. 656 sqq.

ARTICLE 4

QUESTIONING AND INSTRUCTING PENITENTS

1. THE DUTY OF THE CONFESSOR TO QUESTION THE PENITENT (*Interrogatio*).—This duty arises from the nature of the Sacrament. Penance is a tribunal of justice. When the penitent's self-accusation is defective, so that the confessor cannot judge of the completeness of the avowal or the disposition of the sinner, prudent questioning becomes a duty.[1] Generally speaking, the presumption is in favor of the penitent. One who voluntarily comes to confession may be presumed to have the right disposition and to tell the truth. Hence no penitent should be interro-

1 *Conc. Lat. IV.*, c. 21: "*Sacerdos sit discretus et cautus, ut more periti medici superinfundat vinum et oleum vulneribus sauciati, diligenter inquirens et peccatoris circumstantias et peccati, quibus prudenter intellegat, quale debeat ei praebere consilium et cuiusmodi remedium adhibere diversis experimentis utendo ad salvandum aegrotum.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 437).—*Rit. Rom.*, tit. 3, c. 1, n. 15: "*Si poenitens numerum et species et circumstantias peccatorum explicatu necessarias non expresserit, eum sacerdos prudenter interroget.*"—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, n. 461: "*Confessarius tenetur interrogare poenitentes de specie, numero et circumstantiis peccatorum speciem mutantibus, eorumque causis, de habitu et occasionibus proximis, quoties rationabiliter praesumit vel dubitat, ista non sufficienter declarari. Ratio est, quia confessarius, ut minister sacramenti, debet procurare eius integritatem, et ut iudex, debet sibi comparare cognitionem necessariam ad aequum iudicium ferendum.*"

gated unless there is a well-founded doubt as to the integrity of his avowal or the absence of some element that is essential for the valid and worthy reception of the Sacrament.

When it becomes necessary to ask questions, these will in the nature of the case deal with one of the following subjects: the number and specific character of one or more of the mortal sins confessed; necessary circumstances; causes and occasions; sinful habits; relapses, or the duty of restitution. Occasionally it may also be necessary to question the penitent in regard to his profession or occupation, his state of life, the time or validity of his last confession, etc.[2]

To perform his duty effectively, the confessor, in questioning a penitent, should proceed with caution,[3] prudence,[4] and discretion, especially in matters pertaining to the sixth and ninth commandments.[5] Besides the questions he is in duty bound to ask, others may suggest themselves, and here especially great prudence is necessary.

2 Gury (*Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 463): *"Confessarius non tenetur interrogare poenitentes, qui, licet rudes, videntur sufficienter instructi pro suâ conditione et diligentes in confitendo peccata cum circumstantiis iuxta statum et capacitatem suam. A fortiori necesse non est ordinarie examinare eos, qui saepe confitentur et raro peccant graviter, ut sunt personae devotae, religiosi, ecclesiastici, nisi videatur ab eis omitti aliquid necessario explicandum."*

3 *Op. cit.*, n. 462: *"Confessarius non tenetur interrogare poenitentem nisi cum ordinariâ sollicitudine. Ratio est, poenitens ipse non tenetur summâ, sed tantum mediocri, id est, ordinariâ diligentiâ se examinare. Nequit autem esse gravior obligatio confessarii, quam poenitentis, quum confessarius non teneatur examinare poenitentem nisi secundario seu ipsius defectu."*

4 *Conc. Lat. IV.*, c. 21; *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 3, c. 1, n. 15.

5 Cfr. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 219.

By working upon the emotions of a well disposed penitent the confessor can often prepare the way for grace.[6]

2. The Confessor's Duty of Admonishing and Instructing the Penitent (*Monitio*).—This duty arises from the office of teacher, which a priest is bound to exercise whenever he finds a penitent to be ignorant of what is necessary for the integrity of confession or of the disposition required for the worthy reception of the Sacrament.

a) Hence the confessor is in duty bound to instruct every penitent who is either vincibly and culpably or invincibly ignorant of the truths necessary for salvation and the more important duties of life. When a penitent is invincibly ignorant in regard to some of these duties, the confessor should not instruct him unless he has good reason to think that his advice will be heeded, lest what was purely a material sin should be-

[6] *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 3, c. 1, n. 46: "*Sacerdos caveat, ne curiosis aut inutilibus interrogationibus quemquam detineat, praesertim iuniores utriusque sexus vel alios de eo, quod ignorant, imprudenter interrogans, ne scandalum patiantur indeque peccare discant.*"—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 629: "*Ne examen sit curiosum de non necessariis, unde confessarii existimatio, sacramenti dignitas et poenitentis profectus minuatur; ne sit indiscretum, v. g., de iis, quae moraliter certum est, a tali non solere committi, vel ex quibus discat peccare poenitens vel de inverecundis inverecunde vel de numero nimis anxie.*" (Ed. Gaudé, III, 653).—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 463: "*Interrogatio semper debet esse moderata, discreta, opportuna, et omnibus circumstantiis qualitatis, aetatis, conditionis poenitentis congrua. Sic reverentia sacramenti, decentia naturalis, caritas et prudentia erga poenitentes requirere videntur.*"—P. A. Kirsch, *Zur Geschichte der kath. Beichte*, pp. 212 sq.

come a formal sin. The same rule holds good whenever there is reason to apprehend that instruction of the penitent would result in quarrels, enmity, scandal, or other serious evil.

When a confessor has reason to doubt whether instruction is likely to prove useful, he had better say nothing.[7]

b) If the penitent asks for instruction, it should always be given regardless of its probable effect. However, in such cases the confessor had better not go beyond the question asked, unless additional instruction is sure to prove beneficial. For instance, if a penitent has married in spite of the vow of chastity, and asks whether the marriage is valid and whether he is allowed to *render* the *debitum,* the confessor should reply in the affirmative, without informing the penitent that he has no right to *demand* that which he may render.

c) The confessor is obliged to remove invincible ignorance by instruction whenever failure to do so would result in injury to the common good, or whenever it can reasonably be expected that the penitent will obey, either now or later; or

[7] Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 616: "*Utrum autem facienda sit monitio in dubio, an sit profutura vel obfutura? Respondetur: Si non timetur de damno, omnino quidem fieri debet; si vero dubitatur tam de damno quam de fructu secuturo, tunc confessarius pensare debet damnum et utile, item gradum timoris damni ac spei utilitatis, et eligere id, quod iudicat praeponderare. Ceterum in dubio regulariter mihi videtur dicendum, quod mala formalia potius evitanda sint, quam materialia.*" (Ed. Gaudé, III, 641).

if the penitent would otherwise remain in proximate danger of formal sin, or his ignorance would result in spiritual injury to himself, *e. g.*, by regarding as sinful something which is permitted.

In applying these rules it is necessary to proceed with caution. "Some theologians assume," says Linsenmann, "that there is a species of error in moral matters which the confessor had better leave untouched, in other words, that the penitent runs less danger of committing formal sin if he transgresses a moral law ignorantly and in good faith, than if he is instructed with regard to his error. This assumption is scarcely ever founded in fact. An error that involves no moral danger either to the penitent or to others, cannot possibly have reference to the substance of the moral law, but will invariably pertain to purely human precepts of minor importance. If the penitent were unwilling to accept instruction in a matter involving mortal sin,—and only in such a case would it be the confessor's duty to instruct him,—he would be incapable of receiving absolution." [8]

Readings.—St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis,* l. VI, n. 607–616 (ed. Gaudé, Vol. III, pp. 631 sqq.).—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.,* Vol. III, pp. 462 sqq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Past.,* Vol. I, pp. 195 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie,* Vol. III, 5th ed., pp. 234 sqq.—J. E. Pruner, *Lehrbuch der Pastoraltheologie,* Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 247 sqq., 255 sqq.—F. P. Kenrick, *Theologia Moralis,* Vol. II, 2nd ed., Malines 1861, pp. 256 sqq.—Al. Sabetti, S.J., *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* 22nd ed. (by T. Barrett, S.J.), New York 1915, pp. 745 sqq.

8 Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie,* p. 219.

ARTICLE 5

THE SEAL OF CONFESSION

1. Definition.—By the seal of confession (*sigillum confessionis, secretum sacramentale*) is understood the obligation of keeping secret knowledge gained through sacramental confession.[1]

2. Source of the Obligation.—The seal of confession binds the confessor and (*per accidens*) all others who have knowledge of the matter of a sacramental confession through whatever means. It is absolute and, *per se,* admits of no exception.

As for the penitent, though not bound by the seal, he is obliged to treat confessional matter as a natural secret, so far at least as the dignity of the Sacrament or regard for the confessor demand.

The obligation of the seal rests on the natural, on positive divine, and on ecclesiastical law.[2]

1 Cfr. H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.,* l. VI, tr. 4, c. 3: "*Sigillum hoc est obligatio iuris divini strictissima in omni casu, etiam quo integri regni salus periclitaretur, ad tacendum (etiam post mortem poenitentis) dicta in confessione (id est in ordine ad absolutionem sacramentalem) omnia, quorum revelatio sacramentum redderet onerosum vel odiosum.*" (Ed. Tornac., 1876; Vol. I, p. 573).

2 Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.,* II, n. 495: "*Datur strictissima obligatio inviolabiliter servandi sigillum confessionis. Constat* (1) *ex iure naturali, et quidem triplici titulo, nempe ex caritate, ex iustitiâ, ex religione;* (2) *ex iure divino positivo, saltem implicite, nam ex institutione Christi confessio secreta esse debet, ergo eo ipso a Christo imposita est confessariis obligatio sigilli servandi;* (3) *ex iure ecclesiastico; constat ex variis iuris canonici locis, praesertim ex Concilio Lateranensi quarto, c. 21: 'Utriusque sexus,' ubi dicitur: 'Caveat autem omnino*

a) The natural law commands silence regarding that which is communicated in confidence. When a man goes to confession, he expects that his secret will be locked in the bosom of the confessor. Hence to keep the seal inviolate is a matter of strict natural duty. In many countries the civil law treats the revelation of any secret communicated in confidence as a misdemeanor.

b) The positive divine law demands the inviolability of the seal because it is a necessary condition of the enforcement of the precept of confession. "Confession could not be enforced," says Bishop Linsenmann, "if priests were not bound to the strictest secrecy concerning that which is revealed to them in the confessional. Hence the seal is justified, not only by the interest of the penitent, but by the interest of confession itself."[3] "The divine command to confess one's sins," says Dr. Krieg, "would be an intolerable burden if the penitent were not assured of silence on the part of the confessor."[4]

c) The law of the Church forbids the revelation of sacramentally confessed sins under severe penalties.[5]

3. Nature of the Obligation.—The obligation of keeping the seal binds every confessor under pain of mortal sin. It is absolute, *i. e.*, admits of no *parvitas materiae*, at least directly.[6]

[*confessarius*], *ne verbo aut signo aut alio quovis modo aliquatenus prodat peccatorem: sed si prudentiore consilio indiguerit, illud absque ullâ expressione personae caute requirat . . .*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 438).

3 F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 220.

4 Krieg, *Wissenschaft der Seelenleitung*, Vol. I, p. 515.

5 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 889, § 1: "*Sacramentale sigillum inviolabile est; quare caveat diligenter confessarius, ne verbo aut signo aut alio quovis modo et quavis de causa prodat aliquatenus peccatorem.*"—On the penalties cfr. J. Hollweck, *Die kirchlichen Strafgesetze*, Mayence, 1899, pp. 332 sqq.; J. Laurentius, S.J., *Inst. Iuris Eccles.*, n. 456, 546.

6 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 497: "*. . . saltem in revelatione directâ. Ratio est, quia materia,*

Nor does it cease with the death of the penitent, but binds always and for ever, regardless of the inconveniences that may arise for the confessor, the penitent, a third party, or the common welfare.[7] The confessor is not allowed to remind the penitent outside of confession of anything he has heard in the sacred tribunal, much less to communicate confessional matter to others.[8]

In some countries the civil law expressly admits the right, nay upholds the duty of the confessor to preserve the seal of confession, though sometimes with restrictions which Catholic theology cannot approve.[9] Whether confession made to a priest is privileged in English law is a matter of doubt.[10] In the United States of America the position of the question at common law is the same as in England, but some of the States have made the privilege a matter of statutory law.[11]

What a priest hears in sacramental confession,

etiam levissima, includit totam rationem praecepti."

7 Gury, *op. cit.*, n. 495: *"Obligatio sigilli confessionis semper in omni casu urget, ita ut in nullo casu possibili liceat revelare quidquam in confessione auditum et acceptum. Obligatio enim sigilli confessionis nullam patitur exceptionem ex eo quod, si aliqua posset dari exceptio, semper homines timerent, ne tale peccatum foret illa causa frangendi licite sigillum, et proinde odiosum evaderet sacramentum. Porro nulla causa assequendi vel mali fugiendi istud malum odii sacramenti compensare potest."*

8 Cfr. N. Knopp, *Der kath. Seelsorger als Zeuge vor Gericht*, Ratisbon 1849.

9 F. H. Vering, *Lehrbuch des Kirchenrechtes*, 3rd ed., Freiburg 1893, pp. 211, 739 sqq.

10 Cfr. R. S. Nolan in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, XIII, 649 sqq.

11 C. Zollmann, *American Civil Church Law*, N. Y., 1917, pp. 333 sq.

he hears not as a man, but as the representative of God, and hence, when asked as a private individual, he may deny knowledge which he possesses only from confession. In acting thus he does not employ a purely mental reservation because every one knows that a priest, if asked for information, even in court, answers merely as a man, and not as the vicar of God.[12] The case would be different if he were expressly asked whether he knew of a thing through confession. He would then not be allowed to say *no* because this would be a manifest untruth or might involve a violation of the seal—an untruth if he really had the knowledge which he was asked to betray; a violation of the seal if he knew nothing about the matter in question. His duty in such an emergency would be to denounce the question as improper and refuse to answer even at the risk of life.[13]

The penitent may permit the confessor to use knowledge obtained through sacramental confession, provided

12 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, *Supplem.*, qu. 11, art. 1, ad 3: "*Homo non adducitur in testimonium nisi ut homo, et ideo sine laesione conscientiae potest iurare, se nescire, quod scit tantum ut Deus.*"—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 646.—J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 497: "*Quid confessarius respondere debeat interroganti de auditis in confessione? Respondeat, etiam cum iuramento, si opus sit, se nihil scire, vel nihil audivisse, quia nullam habet scientiam communicabilem. Ita omnes.*"—G. Estius, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 17, n. 14: "*Sensus responsionis erit: Nescio eo cognitionis modo, secundum quem teneor, tibi interroganti respondere.*"—Cfr. A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Casus Conscientiae*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., n. 574.

13 Cfr. F. Lorinser, *Die Lehre von der Verwaltung des hl. Bussakramentes*, 2nd ed., p. 37.

such permission be restricted to the penitent's own sins, (exclusively, say, of the sins of an accomplice) and no detriment is likely to accrue therefrom to the sanctity of the Sacrament; provided, furthermore, that no scandal be given.

Should a penitent wish to consult his confessor outside the confessional in regard to something mentioned in confession, the confessor may consider this an implicit permission to use his sacramental knowledge.[14]

It is no violation of the seal, though, as a rule, inadvisable for the confessor to mention previously confessed sins in a later confession.[15]

The confessor may, if he sees fit, add something to his admonition, immediately after absolution, before the penitent leaves the confessional, and this without special permission of the penitent, because of the moral union with the confession just made.

When a priest is in doubt whether information that falls under the seal has come to him through confession or by some other channel, he is obliged to observe the *secretum sacramentale*.[16]

4. THE OBJECT OF THE SEAL.—The obligation of keeping secret knowledge gained through

14 Cfr. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 222.

15 Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 499: *"An confessarius possit loqui cum poenitente de ipsius confessione? (1) Potest loqui in confessione de omnibus confessionibus praeteritis. (2) Potest etiam loqui post absolutionem, antequam poenitens discesserit vel si redierit. Ratio est, quia licet completum sit sacramentum, tamen iudicium adhuc moraliter perseverat. (3) Non potest extra sacrum tribunal ne ullum quidem verbum facere poenitenti circa ea, quae ad eius confessionem pertinent, sine ipsius licentiâ. Excipe, nisi ipse poenitens prior de suâ conscientiâ loquatur vel nisi confessarius certo sciat, id poenitenti gratum fore."*

16 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 633; Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 497: *"Confessarius ad sigillum tenetur etiam in dubio, an aliquid dictum sit a poenitente in ordine ad confessionem."*

sacramental confession embraces everything that might prove disagreeable or injurious to the penitent or tend to render the Sacrament odious; in particular:

a) All sins revealed by the penitent, venial as well as mortal, together with their attending circumstances and the names and deeds of accomplices;

b) The penance imposed, and whatever might betray the fact that absolution was denied;

c) Physical or moral defects of the penitent, *e. g.*, illegitimate birth, scrupulosity, impatience, in so far as these defects are known to the confessor only through confession;

d) Virtues, special graces or prerogatives, the disclosure of which might cause the penitent or others pain or inconvenience;

e) The fact that one has gone to confession, if the penitent wishes to conceal it or if his interests demand secrecy.[17]

The confessor is bound to abstain from all words, signs, or other indications from which the nature of the matter revealed to him in confession or anything that falls under the seal might be inferred. Hence he is not permitted to deny holy Communion to a penitent whom he has refused to absolve, provided, of course, he knows of his unworthiness only through confession, and the penitent demands the Holy Eucharist in the ordinary way.[18]

17 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Mor.*, l. VI, n. 640–644; Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 502–504.

18 *Conc. Lat. IV.*, c. 21 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 437 sq.)

5. THE SUBJECT OF THE SEAL.—By the subject of the seal we mean the person bound to observe it. That person is primarily the confessor or any layman who may have wrongfully impersonated a priest in the tribunal of penance;[19] secondarily, all who have coöperated in confession, *e. g.*, the superior to whom the penitent has applied for absolution from reserved sins; the interpreter through whom he has confessed his sins; any one whom the confessor, with the penitent's permission, has consulted or asked for advice, or who has written out the penitent's sins at his request, or who has accidentally (*casu*) or purposely (*furtive*) overheard the confession or otherwise obtained a knowledge of it.[20]

Any one who has read, or heard read, the notes

19 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 645.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 498: *"Tenetur primario ad sigillum confessarius quilibit, sive verus sive fictus, et per errorem legitimus existimatus, et proinde etiam laicus, qui se sacerdotem fingeret et confessionem exciperet. Ratio est, quia quoties quis confitetur in ordine ad sacramentum, qui eum audit, quicunque sit, contrahit eo ipso sigilli obligationem; secus enim odium sacramenti inde sequeretur. Ita omnes."*

20 *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 889, § 2.—Cf. Gury, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, n. 498: *"Tenentur secundario, qui confessionis fiunt participes, seu ii omnes, ad quos notitia confessionis quocunque modo pervenit, sive ex ipsâ confessione, sive ex mediis ad illam ordinatis: (1) ex ipsâ confessione, nam res accusata ad illos pervenit eadem ratione, propter quam obligatio sigilli datur, scilicet, ne odium in sacramentum creetur; (2) ex mediis, nam odium mediorum in finem ipsum redundat. Hinc ad sigillum tenentur: (1) interpretes adhibiti in confessione peragendâ; (2) superiores, a quibus extra sacramentum petitur facultas absolvendi vel recipiendi absolutionem a casu reservato; (3) qui peccatum, dum quis confitetur, sive de industriâ sive etiam inculpabiliter audiunt, et pariter alii, qui ab istis audirent; (4) qui scribunt confessionem rudium vel ignorantium linguam confessarii, quoties vix alio modo confessio peragi posset; (5) doctores a confessario consulti, de licentiâ poenitentis; (6) ii omnes, quibus*

which served another as a necessary means of confessing his sins, (*e. g.*, in the case of a deaf-mute) is obliged to keep the sacramental seal; otherwise the duty of silence is purely natural.[21]

As the obligation of secrecy arises solely from sacramental confession (*ex omni et solâ confessione sacramentali*), a fictitious confession knowingly made to a layman or to an unauthorized priest does not impose the sacramental seal, but merely entails the natural obligation of keeping secret whatever is communicated in confidence.[22]

6. VIOLATION OF THE SEAL.—The seal of confession can be broken (*violatio, laesio sive fractio sigilli sacramentalis*) either directly or indirectly.[23]

a) It would be a *direct* breach of the seal were

confessarius sacrilege vel imprudenter peccata in confessione audita manifestasset."

21 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 645–650 (Ed. Gaudé, III, 665); Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 498.

22 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 496: "(1) *Confessio, quae scienter fit laico vel sacerdoti iurisdictione carenti, non inducit obligationem sigilli, sed tantum secreti naturalis. Secus dicendum est, si sacerdos credatur approbatus, quia confessio ex parte poenitentis vera est sacramentalis.* (2) *Si quis ad confessarium accedat animo eum decipiendi, irridendi, in peccatum pertrahendi, aliquid ab eo extorquendi, non se accusat in ordine ad sacramentum, et nulla est obligatio.* (3) *Contra, si quis conscientiam confessario aperiat sine voluntate absolutionem suscipiendi, sed ut consilium obtineat vel ut mandato superioris aliquo modo satisfaciat, adest obligatio sigilli sacramentalis."*

23 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 505: "*Sigillum duplici modo violari potest:* (1) *Directe revelando expresse aliquid ex solâ confessione cognitum, v. g., si dicatur: Titus hoc fecit, etc.;* (2) *Indirecte aliquid dicendo aut faciendo, ex quo quis cognoscere aut suspicari possit peccatum vel delictum poenitentis in solâ confessione cognitum, aut ex quo poenitenti vel aliis, v. g. complicibus, possit oriri pudor, molestia, dedecus, damnum vel quodlibet gravamen."*

a priest to name a penitent and say he has committed such and such a sin, of which he (the priest) has knowledge only through confession, or to say that the penitent told him such a sin in confession. Any direct breach of the seal, even if the sins revealed are but slight, is a grievous violation of justice and a sacrilege.[23a] It is called complete (*violatio plena*) if it includes the name of the penitent, the character of his sin, and the fact that he confessed it. When one of these details is lacking, the violation is termed partial (*partialis*).

b) The seal is broken *indirectly* when the confessor says or does, or omits to say or do, something from which others may gain a knowledge of confessional matter, or by which a penitent may be justly aggrieved or confession made odious.[24] Such an indirect violation of the seal is merely a venial sin when the danger of publicity is slight or the carelessness of the confessor not grievously sinful.

Direct violation of the seal admits of no *parvitas materiae,* whereas indirect violation does. Thus the matter would be slight, and the sin consequently venial, if a confessor would reveal something he had heard in confession through inadvertence, in the firm belief that the identity of the penitent was unknown or the danger of its being guessed extremely slight.

23a *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 889.

24 Cfr. Gury, *op. cit.*, II, n. 506–508.

Priests who hear confession should never converse about matters heard in the confessional with lay persons, and with fellow priests only to seek advice or instruction, and always with great caution (*tecto nomine*), so that there is no danger of the seal being violated.

A confessor violates the seal also by saying that a certain sin is rife in a community (parish, monastery, seminary), especially if the community is small.[25]

Knowledge gained in the confessional may not be used by superiors for the external government of their subjects as such a proceeding is apt to annoy the penitents, or to render the Sacrament odious, or to lead to an indirect breach of the seal.[26]

Provided the seal is kept intact, a confessor may, if necessary, communicate information obtained in sacramental confession to prudent and experienced persons for the purpose of seeking advice, but beyond this, he must observe strict silence.[27]

25 St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 654.—J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 508: *"An frangat sigillum, qui dicit, tale vitium regnare in civitate vel pago, aut ibi gravia crimina committi? Affirmatur, si locus sit satis angustus, v. g. si non constet tribus hominum millibus circiter. Secus, si oppidum sit amplum et crimina publica saepius ibi patrentur."*

26 Cfr. Th. Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. II, p. 232. The new *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 890, forbids such use absolutely.

27 Cfr. the *Instructio S. R. et U. Inquisitionis* of June 9, 1915, which says, *inter alia: "Non desunt nihilominus quandoque salutaris huius sacramenti administri, qui, reticitis quamquam omnibus quae poenitentis personam quomodocunque prodere queant, de submissis in sacramentali confessione clavium potestati sive in privatis collocutionibus sive in publicis ad populum concionibus (ad auditorum, ut aiunt, aedificationem) temere sermonem facere non vereantur. Cum autem in re tanti ponderis et momenti nedum perfectam et consummatam iniuriam sed et omnem iniuriae speciem et suspicionem studiosissime vitari oporteat, palam est omnibus quam mos hiusmodi sit improbandus. Nam etsi id fiat salvo substantialiter secreto sacramentali, pias tamen audientium aures haud offendere et diffidentiam in eorum animis haud excitare sane non potest. Quod quidem ab huius sacramenti natura prorsus est alienum, quo clementissimus Deus, quae per fragilitatem humanae conversationis peccata com-*

Readings.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica, Supplementum,* qu. 11, art. 1-5.—St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis,* l. V, n. 633-661. —F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie,* pp. 220 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Casus Conscientiae,* Vol. II, 3rd ed., Freiburg 1907, n. 530-580.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 228 sqq.—Addis and Arnold's *Catholic Dictionary,* 9th ed. (by T. B. Scannell), London 1917, pp. 766 sq.—R. S. Nolan in the *Catholic Encyclopedia,* Vol. XIII, pp. 649-665.—Bedeley, *Privilege of Religious Confession in English Courts of Justice,* London 1865.—Hopwood, *The Law of Confession in Criminal Cases,* London 1871.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* pp. 757 sqq.—F. P. Kenrick, *Theologia Moralis,* Vol. II, pp. 197 sqq.—Ad. Tanquerey, S.S., *Synopsis Theologiae Moralis et Pastoralis,* Vol. I, 2nd ed., Tournai 1904, pp. 214 sqq. —H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. III, 11th ed., pp. 491 sqq., Innsbruck 1914.

ARTICLE 6

SACRAMENTAL ABSOLUTION

The priest, sitting as a judge in the tribunal of Penance, is not free to loose or bind at pleasure. He is the servant of Christ and dispenser of the mysteries of God, and as such in duty bound, on the one hand to uphold the dignity of the Sacrament, and, on the other, to safeguard the spirit-

misimus, misericordissimae suae pietatis venia penitus abstergit atque omnino obliviscitur. Sacerdotes sibi subditos sedulo edoceri curent [Ordinarii], ne quid unquam, occasione praesertim sacrarum missionum et exercitiorum spiritualium ad confessionis sacramentalis materiam pertinens, quavis sub forma et quovis sub praetextu, ne obiter quidem et nec directe neque indirecte (excepto casu necessariae consultationis iuxta regulas a probatis auctoribus traditas proponendae) in suis seu publicis seu privatis sermonibus attingere audeant; eosque in experimentis pro eorum habilitatione ad confessiones excipiendas hac super re peculiariter examinari iubeant." Ferreres, *Comp. Theol. Mor.,* Vol. II, n. 771 sq.

ual welfare of his penitents.[1] Hence arises the strict obligation of either giving sacramental absolution or denying or deferring the same according to the dictates of conscience.[2]

1. WHEN ABSOLUTION SHOULD BE GIVEN.—The confessor is bound in strict justice, and under pain of mortal sin, to absolve all properly disposed penitents who confess to him; for every Catholic who is truly sorry for his sins has a right to the Sacrament of which absolution is an essential part.[3] The presumption, as we have seen before, is always in favor of the penitent, and unless a confessor has serious reasons for assuming the contrary, he should act on the ethical principle that every man must be presumed to be good until or unless he is proved to be bad (*nemo praesumitur malus nisi probetur*). All that is necessary is to have moral certainty that

1 I Cor. IV, 1–2.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, *Suppl.*, qu. 18, art. 4.

2 *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 3, c. 1, n. 22: "*Videat diligenter sacerdos, quando et quibus conferenda vel deneganda vel differenda sit absolutio, ne absolvat eos, qui talis beneficii sunt incapaces.*"

3 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 467: "*Absolutio concedi debet ex iustitiâ et sub gravi omni poenitenti rite confesso et legitime disposito. Ratio est, quia in ipso confessionis actu initus est quidam quasi-contractus sacer, vi cuius poenitens rite confessus et legitime dispositus habet ius ad sacramentum suscipiendum. Secus enim onus intolerabile sine iustâ causâ poenitenti imponeretur, scilicet, ut apud alium confessionem instituat, quin confidere tuto possit, se ab isto novo confessario absolutionem esse accepturum. Praeterea hoc etiam exigit finis institutionis sacramenti et tribunalis poenitentiae, quod misericordiae impertiendae causâ a Christo institutum est. Sacerdos igitur absolutionem poenitenti disposito denegando iniuste ageret, potestate clavium abuteretur et odiosum redderet sacramentum.*"

there are no valid reasons for doubting the disposition of the penitent.[4]

The validity of absolution in no way depends on the performance of the satisfaction imposed.[5]

Absolution should be given conditionally:

a) When the confessor entertains a serious doubt with regard to one of the following points:

α) Whether there is sufficient matter for the administration of the Sacrament;

β) Whether he has already absolved the penitent;

γ) Whether he possesses the necessary jurisdiction;

δ) Whether the penitent has the use of reason;

ε) Whether the penitent is dead or alive.

b) When the confessor can arrive at no certain conclusion with regard to the penitent's disposition, and absolution cannot be deferred, he should absolve conditionally.[6]

2. WHEN ABSOLUTION SHOULD BE DENIED.—The confessor is obliged in justice and under pain of mortal sin to deny absolution to applicants who are not properly disposed, because such are unworthy of forgiveness.[7]

4 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 5, qu. 50: "*Si* [*confessarius*], *auditâ confessione, iudicaverit, neque in enumerandis peccatis diligentiam neque in detestandis dolorem poenitenti omnino defuisse, absolvi poterit.*"

5 *Prop. Damnat. ab Alex. VIII.*, Dec. 7, 1690, prop. 16–18 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1306 sqq.).

6 Cfr. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 232 sq.; Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. III, 4th ed., pp. 241 sqq.

7 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 469: "*Absolutio omnino neganda est in omni casu, etiam extremae necessitatis, poenitentibus certe indispositis.*"—Lacroix, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, P. 2, n. 1699: "*Munus confessarii est absolvere dispositum et non alium. Moraliter ei constare debet de bonâ dispositione poenitentis, alias absolvendo peccabit mortaliter.*"

A penitent lacks the right disposition if he:

a) is ignorant of the principal dogmas of the Catholic religion;

b) shows no real sorrow for his sins or evidently lacks the required purpose of avoiding mortal sin and its voluntary proximate occasions;

c) refuses to restore ill-gotten goods to their rightful owner, or to repair public scandal given, or to become reconciled to his enemies.[8]

In a word, absolution must be denied to all who are unwilling to comply with some serious obligation.

Before the confessor discharges a penitent unabsolved, however, he should try by all means in his power to dispose him for the worthy reception of the Sacrament.[9]

When a penitent is properly disposed, and capable of receiving absolution, but guilty of some sin that makes his case one reserved to higher authority, he cannot be absolved without special faculties.[10]

3. WHEN ABSOLUTION SHOULD BE RESERVED. —As a rule absolution may be reserved or

8 *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 3, c. 1, n. 22: "*Quales* [*incapaces*] *sunt, qui nulla dant signa doloris, qui odia et inimicitias deponere aut aliena, si possunt, restituere aut proximam peccandi occasionem deserere aut alio modo peccata derelinquere et vitam in melius emendare nolunt, aut qui publicum scandalum dederunt, nisi publice satisfaciant et scandalum tollant.*"

9 Cfr. Leo XII, Constit. "*Caritate Christi*," Dec. 25, 1825.

10 *Rit. Rom.*, *l. c.*: "[*Sacerdos*] *neque etiam eos absolvat, quorum peccata sunt superioribus reservata.*" —Cfr. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 222 sqq.; Hilarius a Sexten, *Tract. de Censuris Eccles.*, Mayence 1898, pp. 20 sqq.

postponed only when the disposition of the penitent is in doubt and there is no urgent necessity (danger of death, etc.) which would justify the giving of conditional absolution.[11] In the case of certain occasional (*occasionarii*), habitual (*consuetudinarii*) or relapsed sinners (*recidivi*), regarding whom it is doubtful whether they have real contrition for their sins or the required purpose of amendment, it is sometimes necessary to reserve absolution.[12] Occasionally, too, it may be well to withhold absolution temporarily in order to promote the spiritual welfare of a well-disposed penitent, either with, or under certain conditions without, his consent.[13]

However, absolution should not be deferred as a means of amendment (*remedium animae*) unless the confessor is certain that the penitent will be benefitted by this measure.[14]

11 Gury, *l. c.*: *"Poenitentibus dubie dispositis absolutio neganda est extra casum gravis necessitatis; positâ autem tali necessitate absolutio sub conditione impertiri potest aut etiam debet."*

12 St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 452–464.

13 Idem, *ibid.*, n. 462.—Idem, *Praxis Confess.*, n. 76.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 468: *"Absolutio differri potest ad breve tempus etiam poenitenti rite disposito sine eius consensu, quando nempe confessarius (prudenter) iudicat, id utile esse ad eius emendationem. Ratio est, quia dilatio absolutionis non est eiusdem denegatio, et licet poenitens dispositus ius habet ad absolutionem, non tamen ideo ius habet ad eam statim absque ulla mora obtinendam, saltem per se loquendo. Nam confessarius non est tantum iudex, sed et medicus, ideoque recte potest, immo aliquando debet, absolutionem differre, si iudicet tale remedium animae poenitentis notabiliter profuturum esse. . . . Dixi, saltem per se loquendo, quia si absolutio differri nequeat sine magno incommodo poenitentis, statim concedenda foret, poenitens enim tunc ius strictum ad eam statim obtinendam habere censetur."*

14 St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 463: *"Magnum dubium,*

The practice of reserving or postponing absolution as a means of amendment seems to have been unknown in former times.[15] Modern writers recommend it even in the case of penitents guilty of venial sins only. "To defer absolution," says one author, "may be useful, nay necessary, even when the penitent is guilty only of venial sin; for instance, if the confessor sees that the venial sins of which the penitent accuses himself, will gradually lead to mortal sin (dangerous company-keeping, undue intimacy with persons of the other sex, etc.), or that the venial sins to which the penitent is addicted, impede his spiritual progress, as in the case of priests and religious, whose state of life obliges them to greater perfection, and in the case of lay persons who are frequent communicants."

Note, however, that the new *Codex Iuris Canonici* says: "If a confessor has no reason to doubt the disposition of the penitent, and the latter begs to be absolved, absolution should neither be denied nor deferred."[16]

READINGS.—St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, l. VI, n. 431, 462. —IDEM, *Praxis Confessariorum*, n. 19 sqq.—J. P. Gury, *Compendium Theologiae Moralis*, Vol. II, n. 467–469.—F. Lorinser, *Die Lehre von der Verwaltung des hl. Bussakramentes*, 2nd ed., pp. 51 sqq.—A. Schick and F. D. Schmitt, *Kurze Anleitung zur Verwaltung des hl. Bussakramentes*, 3rd ed., Fulda 1905.—*Instructio Pastoralis Eystettensis*, 5th ed., Freiburg 1902, pp. 256 sqq.

quod vertitur, est, an hoc remedium dilatae absolutionis saepius expediat adhibere vel ne poenitenti iam sufficienter disposito ad absolutionem sine eius consensu. Commune est apud doctores, nullo modo expedire absolutionem differre, quando dilatio magis obfutura quam profutura censetur. Idem dicendum, quum ex dilatione absolutionis poenitens pateretur notam infamiae. . . . Alii vero dicunt, raro expedire, quod poenitenti disposito differatur absolutio. Melius dicendum, quod certa regula in hoc statui non possit, sed confessarius ex circumstantiis occurrentibus se dirigere debet, et postquam Deo se commendavit, ut erit a Deo inspiratus, absolutionem differat vel impertiatur."

15 Gury-Ballerini-Palmieri, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 14th ed., Rome 1902, n. 433.

16 Can. 886: *"Si confessarius dubitare nequeat de poenitentis dispositionibus et hic absolutionem petat, absolutio nec deneganda, nec differenda est."*

ARTICLE 7

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

1. NECESSITY.—The necessity of imposing a sacramental satisfaction or penance (*satisfactio vel poenitentia*) arises from the nature of the Sacrament.[1] However, since satisfaction is merely an integral part of Penance, absolution would be valid even if the confessor imposed no satisfaction or if the penitent failed to perform the penance imposed. Still, for the valid and worthy reception of the Sacrament it is essential that the penitent be willing to receive and perform the sacramental satisfaction imposed by the confessor.

2. DUTY OF THE CONFESSOR.—As a faithful "steward of the mysteries of God,"[2] the confessor is in duty bound to impose upon every penitent a sacramental penance. Since this penance is intended as a satisfaction for the sins committed, as a remedy for the wounds of the soul, and as an antidote against future sins, it should be proportioned to the penitent's guilt and adapted to age, sex, profession, disposition, etc.[3]

1 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 14; Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 8, can. 12–15.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, *Suppl.*, qu. 12–15.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 506–530 (ed. Gaudé, III, 516).

2 1 Cor. IV, 1–2.

3 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Poenit.*, c. 8; Sess. XXIV, cap. 8, *De Reform.*—*Rit. Rom.*, tit. 3, c. 1, n. 18–21: "*Postremo salutarem et convenientem satisfactionem, quantum spiritus et prudentia suggesserint, iniungat, habitâ ratione status,*

3. Obligation of the Penitent.—The penitent is strictly obliged to perform the penance imposed, provided, of course, it be just and reasonable.[4] To go to confession with the express purpose of not accepting or not performing the penance imposed, would be to receive the Sacrament invalidly as well as unworthily.[5]

If a penitent deems the appointed penance too severe, or unacceptable for some other reason, he may ask to have it commuted or consult another priest.[6]

conditionis, sexus, et aetatis et item dispositionis poenitentium. Videatque, ne pro peccatis gravibus levissimas poenitentias imponat, ne si forte peccatis conniveat, alienorum peccatorum particeps efficiatur. Id vero ante oculos habeat, ut satisfactio non sit tantum ad novae vitae remedium et infirmitatis medicamentum, sed etiam ad praeteritorum peccatorum castigationem. Quare curet, quantum fieri potest, ut contrarias peccatis poenitentias iniungat, veluti avaris elemosynas, libidinosis ieiunia vel alias carnis afflictiones, superbis humilitatis officia, desidiosis devotionis studia. Rarius autem vel serius confitentibus vel in peccata facile recidentibus utilissimum fuerit consulere, ut saepe, puta semel in mense vel certis diebus solemnibus, confiteantur et, si expediat, communicent. Poenitentias pecuniarias sibi ipsis confessarii non applicent neque a poenitentibus quidquam tamquam ministerii sui premium petant vel accipiant. Pro peccatis occultis, quantumvis gravibus, manifestam poenitentiam non imponant."—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 402: *"Confessarius tenetur poenitentias iniungere convenientes et salutares, tum vindicativas tum medicinales: scilicet aliquo modo proportionatas numero et gravitati peccatorum nec non poenitentis facultatibus ac dispositionibus. Ratio ex naturâ rei patet, quum sacramentalis satisfactio ordinata sit in vindictam peccatorum, quae maiora vel minora, plura vel pauciora sunt, nec non ad novas culpas praecavendas."*

4 Cfr. Gury, *op. cit.*, II, n. 409: *"Poenitens omnino tenetur, acceptare atque implere rationabilem poenitentiam sacramentaliter iniunctam, quia poenitentiae acceptatio ad sacramenti essentiam et eius impletio ad sacramenti integritatem pertinet."*

5 St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 516: *"Dubitatur, an poenitens teneatur acceptare iustam poenitentiam, quam imponit confessarius. . . . Sententia communis et vera . . . dicit, peccare qui poenitentiam non acceptat vel non vult implere, et absolutionem vult recipere. Ratio, quia, ut docet Benedictus XIV., sicut confessarius iustam tenetur iniungere poenitentiam, ita poenitens tenetur illam acceptare."*

6 St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 516: *"Probabile tamen est, quod, si poenitenti videatur poeni-*

Failure to perform a reasonable penance imposed for mortal sins and accepted in the confessional, is a mortal sin, unless the matter involved is small or some weighty reason diminishes the guilt.[7]

A penitent is not free to substitute some other penance for the one imposed, but he may, for good reasons, ask in a subsequent confession to have his penance commuted either by the same or by a different confessor.[8]

Besides conscientiously performing the penance imposed in confession, penitents are bound to atone for their sins

tentia illa iusto gravior aut nimis onerosa, respectu ad suam imbecillitatem, tunc, si confessarius nollet eam moderari, posset saltem sine culpa gravi discedere absque absolutione et alium adire confessarium. Hoc tamen intellegendum, si poenitentia illa vere sit irrationabilis vel impar debilibus viribus poenitentis. Nam si contra poenitentia facile posset ab eo impleri, et nollet ex merâ desidiâ illam acceptare, ac cum levi absolvi vellet, non videtur posse excusari a peccato gravi, quia, ut bene ait Lugo, sicut peccaret sacerdos imponendo levem poenitentiam sine iustâ causâ pro gravibus culpis, ita peccaret poenitens volens sine causâ recipere absolutionem cum poenitentiâ iusto leviori."

7 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 409: *"Poenitens tenetur sub gravi implere poenitentiam gravem pro gravibus peccatis impositam, quia materia gravis per se obligat sub gravi. Ita omnes. Probabilius autem sub levi tantum obligatur poenitens ad poenitentiam levem pro levibus culpis impositam, quia materia levis non est capax gravis obligationis."*

8 Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. II, p. 174.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 412: *"Quis poenitentiam commutare possit? I. Nunquam ab ipso poenitente commutari potest, ne in melius quidem, quia poenitentia nequit ad sacramentalis satisfactionis meritum elevari, nisi a ministro ipso sacramenti poenitentiae imposita fuerit. II. Commutari potest:* (1) *a proprio confessario seu ab eo, a quo imposita est, quia legislator potest propriam legem mutare;* (2) *a quolibet alio confessario ad confessiones audiendas approbato, quia quilibet alius confessarius potest esse eiusdem causae iudex, si poenitens illius tribunali se submittat, successor enim in eadem auctoritate potest quidquid potuit antecessor.—Sed ad commutationem licite faciendam requiritur causa iusta, qualis est:* (1) *si poenitentia videatur nimis difficilis;* (2) *si praevideatur poenitens non esse ei satisfacturus ob nimiam repugnantiam, fragilitatem, oblivionem, etc."*

by voluntary good works (prayer, fasting, almsgiving, humility, patience, resignation to the will of God, mortification, and self-denial). The duty of giving satisfaction in this wider sense implies a strenuous effort to neutralize the evil consequences of sin by making restitution of ill-gotten goods, repairing scandal, etc.[9]

4. INDULGENCES.—Indulgences are an effective means of making satisfaction and intensifying penitential zeal.[10] An indulgence is a remission of temporal punishments due to sin.[11] No one is bound to gain indulgences, but it is a very salutary practice to avail oneself of this privilege. The Tridentine Council "teaches and enjoins that the use of indulgences for the Christian people, most salutary and approved by the authority of sacred councils, is to be retained in the Church." [12] To gain an indulgence one must be in the state of sanctifying grace and have the right intention (*intentio lucrandi*). The good works prescribed must be conscientiously performed.[13] When confession

9 Cfr. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 236; Th. H. Simar, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, 3rd ed., p. 361.

10 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, *Suppl.*, qu. 25–27.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 531–534.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 834–853.—F. Beringer, *Die Ablässe*, 11th ed., Paderborn 1906.—A. M. Lepicier, *Indulgences*, New York 1906.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, 2nd ed., pp. 232 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, *Praelect. Dogmat.*, Vol. VII, 2nd ed., pp. 199 sqq.—P. Mocchegiani, *Collectio Indulgentiarum*, Quaracchi 1897.

11 "*Indulgentia est remissio poenae temporalis Deo pro peccatis quoad culpam remissis debitae, concessa a legitimo ministro, extra sacramentum poenitentiae per applicationem thesauri Ecclesiae.*" (Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 834).

12 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXV, *De Indulg.*: "*Indulgentiarum usus christiano populo maxime salutaris et sacrorum conciliorum auctoritate approbatus.*"

13 St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 533.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 837: "*Quattuor requiruntur in subjecto ad indulgentias lucrandas:* (1) *Ut sit baptizatus, quia thesaurus Ecclesiae infidelibus dispensari nequit, ut patet; nec sit excommunicatus, quia secus communione bonorum spiritualium privaretur;* (2) *Ut sit subditus concedentis;* (3) *Ut opera iniuncta tempore praescripto impleat, quia sub hac conditione conceduntur indulgentiae;* (4) *Ut sit in statu gratiae, saltem quando ultimum opus praescriptum ponit, quia non remittitur poena, nisi dimissâ culpâ.*"

and communion are prescribed for the gaining of a plenary indulgence, both conditions must be complied with, even though the conscience is not burdened with mortal sins.[14]

The so-called jubilee indulgence (*iubilaeum maius, annus sanctus*) differs from an ordinary plenary indulgence chiefly in this that the confessors enjoy larger faculties.[15]

In view of the fact that every indulgence presupposes a more than ordinary measure of penitence, faith, and worship, and that the gaining of indulgences usually leads to greater frequentation of the Sacraments, the moral effect of the Catholic doctrine of indulgences must be rated very high.[16] Gaining an indulgence always involves contrition, penitence, and a firm purpose of amendment.[17]

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica,* 3a, Suppl., qu. 12–15.—St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis,* l. VI, n. 506–530 (ed. Gaudé, Vol. III, p. 516).—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. III, pp. 217 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 171 sqq., 443 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* pp. 682 sqq., 1058 sqq.—Ad. Tanquerey, S.S., *Synopsis Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. I, pp. 124 sqq., 277 sqq.—M. J. O'Donnell, "Penance in the New Code," in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record,* No. 601 (Jan. 1918), pp. 14–24.

14 See the Constitutions of Benedict XIV, *"Accepimus in civitate,"* 1746, and *"Inter praeteritos,"* 1749. The confession may be made within eight days, and Communion received on the vigil of the day to which the indulgence is attached. *Codex Iur. Can.,* Can. 931, § 1. See also § 2 of same canon.

15 H. Thurston, S.J., *The Holy Year of Jubilee,* London 1900; IDEM in the *Cath. Encyclopedia, s. v.;* P. Bastien, *De Iubilaeo Anni Sancti aliisque Iubilaeis,* Maredsous 1901.

16 See Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie,* p. 237.

17 E. Göller (*Die päpstliche Pönitentiarie von ihrem Ursprung bis zu ihrer Umgestaltung unter Pius V.,* Vol. I, Rome 1907, pp. 213–242) shows that the concept of *indulgentia plenaria* is genetically contained in the most ancient penitential letters or *confessionalia.* He refutes the Protestant contention that the Church by indulgences meant to forgive the guilt rather than the punishment of sin and demonstrates that the *remissio peccatorum* or *remissio culpae* always depended on valid confession.

SECTION 6

EXTREME UNCTION

1. Subject of the Sacrament.—The Sacrament of Extreme Unction (*extrema unctio*) was instituted for the corporal as well as spiritual well-being of the sick. One of its special effects is to confer upon the dying the grace of a happy death. While it is essential for the validity of this Sacrament that the recipient be seriously ill or, as the technical phrase runs, *in periculo mortis*,[1] it is altogether immaterial whether this condition be due to disease or to old age.[2] Hence the *sacra infirmorum unctio* may not be administered to persons who are ex-

1 Jas. V, 14–15.—Cfr. the *Decretum pro Armenis* of Eugene IV: "*Hoc sacramentum nisi infirmo, de cuius morte timetur, dari non debet.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 595).—The Council of Trent says (Sess. XIV, *De Extr. Unct.*, c. 3): "*Declaratur etiam, esse hanc unctionem infirmis adhibendam, illis vero praesertim, qui tam periculose decumbunt, ut in exitu vitae constituti videantur, unde et sacramentum exeuntium nuncupatur.*"—Cfr. *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 9: "*Quum igitur illi tantum, qui morbo laborant, curatione indigeant: idcirco iis etiam, qui adeo periculose aegrotare videntur, ut, ne supremus illis vitae dies instet, metuendum sit, hoc sacramentum praeberi debet.*"

2 *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 5, c. 1, n. 5: "*Debet hoc sacramentum infirmis praeberi, qui quum ad usum rationis pervenerint, tam graviter laborant, ut mortis periculum imminere videatur, et iis, qui prae senio deficiunt et in diem videntur morituri, etiam sine alia infirmitate.*"—"*Senectus est morbus,*" was a received axiom among the Scholastics.

posed to the danger of death but are not seriously ill, *e. g.*, soldiers going into battle, condemned criminals preparing for execution, etc. The Sacrament may, however, be given to those in danger of dying from an operation or after confinement, but not to those who have not yet attained the use of reason or have not committed a personal sin, that is to say, infants and permanently insane adults (*perpetuo amentes*).[3] If an insane person enjoyed the use of reason at any moment of his previous life, or has occasional lucid intervals, he may and should be given Extreme Unction,[4] because a habitual and interpretative intention suffices for the valid reception of this Sacrament, and there is a well-founded presumption that many insane persons temporarily regain the use of reason at the approach of death, though they are unable to manifest their sanity by definite signs.

3 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 9.—*Rit. Rom.*, tit. 5, c. 1, qu. 9; cfr. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 940, 941, 943.—Cfr. H. Noldin, S. J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis*, 11th ed., Innsbruck 1914, Vol. III, pp. 543 sqq. —J. P. Gury, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, n. 519, says: "*Subiectum huius sacramenti sunt omnes et soli homines peccatores de vita periclitantes. Hinc* (1) *huius sacramenti capaces non sunt pueri ante usum rationis nec perpetuo amentes, quia nulla peccata actualia commiserunt;* (2) *potest conferri extrema unctio mutis, surdis et caecis a nativitate, possunt enim inungi prope organa quibus carent, nam etsi exterius per illa non peccaverint, per interiores tamen animae potentias, quibus ea respondent, peccare potuerunt.*"

4 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 9: "*. . . ad hoc sacramentum suscipiendum apti non sunt . . . amentes item et furiosi, nisi interdum rationis usum haberent, et eo potissimum tempore pii animi significationem darent, peterentque ut sacro oleo ungerentur. Nam qui ab ipso ortu nunquam mentis et rationis compos fuit, ungendus non est; secus vero si aegrotus, quum mente adhuc integrâ huius sacramenti particeps*

Extreme Unction may be administered to a sick man who is really or apparently unconscious, provided there is reason to think that he would ask for, or at least not refuse, the Sacrament if he had full control of his faculties.[5]

Even impenitent sinners and those who have lost consciousness while in the act of sinning (*e. g.*, habitual drunkards) should not be deprived of Extreme Unction, unless they consciously and positively refuse to receive the Sacrament, because a possible subsequent attrition would make it operative.[6]

In conformity with the axiom, *"In dubio pars tutior est eligenda,"* [7] the Sacrament of Extreme Unction may be validly and licitly administered if the danger of death is merely probable or even doubtful.

fieri voluisset, postea in insaniam et furorem incidit."

5 *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 5, c. 1, n. 6: *"Infirmis autem qui, dum sanâ mente et integris sensibus essent, illud petierint seu verisimiliter petiissent, seu dederint signa contritionis, etiamsi deinde loquelam amiserint vel amentes effecti sint, vel delirent aut non sentiant, nihilominus praebeatur."*—*Ibid.*, n. 7: *"Sed si infirmus, dum phrenesi aut amentiâ laborat, verisimiliter posset quidquam facere contra reverentiam sacramenti, non inungatur, nisi periculum tollatur animo."*—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 520: *"Debet dari hoc sacramentum delirantibus, si ante petiverint aut petituri fuissent, si de hoc cogitassent, aut signum doloris de peccatis ostenderint."*

6 *Rit. Rom.*, tit. 5, c. 1, n. 8: *"Impenitentibus vero et qui in manifesto peccato mortali moriuntur et excommunicatis et nondum baptizatis penitus denegetur."*

7 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 714.—J. P. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, n. 520: *"An hoc sacramentum licite conferri possit aegroto in periculo mortis dubio seu probabili? Affirmatur cum sententia communi et vera, quia ad ministrandum hoc sacramentum valide et licite sufficit, ut infirmus laboret morbo ita gravi, ut prudenter existimetur versari in periculo proximo mortis."*

The name Extreme Unction or Last Anointing, which is of popular origin, is not a very fortunate one because of the implication that the Sacrament forebodes death. But as this name correctly describes the primary purpose of the rite, *i. e.*, to prepare and fortify the soul for its last journey, it was adopted by the Church after it had obtained currency among the people. The Council of Trent employs the older term, *"sacra infirmorum unctio,"* and the modern *"extrema unctio,"* indiscriminately.

As Father Kern has pointed out, the custom, which has grown wide-spread since the twelfth century, of demanding and administering Extreme Unction only when all hope of recovery has vanished and death is imminent, "is opposed to the usage of the ancient Church and owes its existence to such causes as popular superstition, false theological teaching, and avarice, which have nothing in common with the operation of the Holy Ghost. This deplorable practice endangers to a very large extent the attainment of the object for which Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ. The principal effect of this Sacrament is the supernatural strengthening of the sick in order to enable them to bear the sufferings and temptations by which they are harassed, for the honor of God, so that, to apply St. Paul's dictum, 'that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.'[8] This supernatural strengthening of soul and body is intended also to induce the sick man, with the extraordinary assistance of divine mercy, to which he is commended in the name of Christ, to make acts of confidence, resignation, patience, contrition, and charity, and

[8] 2 Cor. IV, 17.

thereby to obtain forgiveness of his sins and the complete remission of the temporal punishments due to them. Thus he will be ready, when God calls him hence, to enter straightway into eternal bliss, without passing through the fiery furnace of purification. It was for this reason that the early Christians appropriately called Extreme Unction '*sanantis divinae gratiae dulcedo.*' Its true purpose is to restore the soul to complete health and to prepare it for immediate entrance into glory. This is intimated by the Fathers, clearly expressed in the liturgical prayers of the ancient Church, taught as a revealed truth by the leading Scholastics—including Bl. Albert the Great, St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, Richard a Mediavilla, Peter de Palude, Innocent V, Aureolus, and Capreolus—and acknowledged by the Council of Trent. It often happens that the full recovery of the soul involves such a strong alleviation of bodily suffering that the power of disease is broken and physical recovery follows. In that case the fruition of eternal beatitude is postponed, but it will be all the more glorious if he to whom the privilege has been granted coöperates with the graces bestowed by this wonderful Sacrament." [9]

2. Duty of Receiving the Sacrament.—Though Extreme Unction is not strictly necessary for salvation, every Catholic who is dangerously ill, is in duty bound to receive this Sacrament, and should receive it as soon as there is probable danger of death, and not wait till he has become unconscious or entered into agony.[10]

9 J. Kern, S.J., in the *Zeitschrift für kath. Theologie*, Innsbruck 1906, pp. 617 sqq.

10 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 733; Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 522.

Hence when it is possible to receive this Sacrament, a Catholic in danger of death is bound under pain of mortal sin to ask for it, if failure to do so would give grave scandal or involve contempt of the Sacrament,[11] or if Extreme Unction were the only Sacrament the patient was still able to receive. According to the commonly accepted teaching of St. Thomas, however, refusal to do so is not *per se* a mortal sin.

The state of grace is required for the worthy reception of Extreme Unction, and hence the administration of this Sacrament is generally preceded by Confession and Communion. Extreme Unction, in fact, is the consummation of Penance.[12] When Penance and Holy Communion can no longer be administered, it is sufficient that the patient give a sign of contrition, or, if he be unconscious, that he may be reasonably presumed to desire the Sacraments of the dying.

The positive disposition required for the worthy reception of Extreme Unction consists in acts of faith and hope, and confidence in God's mercy.[13] The Roman Catechism admonishes pastors to preach often on Ex-

[11] *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Extr. Unct.*, c. 3: *"Neque vero tanti sacramenti contemptus absque ingenti scelere et ipsius Spiritus Sancti iniuriâ esse potest."*

[12] *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Extr. Unct.*, c. 3; *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 12; Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. IV, p. 1, 2nd ed., St. Louis 1918.

[13] *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 9: *"Fides et religiosa animi voluntas."*—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 523: *"Quaenam dispositio requiratur ad huius sacramenti susceptionem? (1) Peccatorum confessio, si infirmus in mortali versetur, hoc enim sacramentum est poenitentiae complementum ideoque haec praecedere debet. (2) Quodsi infirmus non possit sua peccata confiteri, contritio saltem praecedat necesse est, hoc enim extremae unctionis sacramentum est primario sacramentum vivorum et ad reliquias peccatorum tollendas praecipue institutum fuit.—Verum in tali casu ipsa attritio sufficere posse videtur,*

treme Unction in order to remind the faithful of their last end and to aid them in repressing evil desires and leading a good Christian life.[14]

3. Duty of Administering Extreme Unction.—Every pastor engaged in the cure of souls is bound in justice and under pain of mortal sin (*ex iustitia et sub gravi*) to administer Extreme Unction, either himself or through another priest, whenever he is asked to do so and able to comply with the request. There are, however, excuses exempting him from this obligation, *e. g.*, serious danger to his own life arising from contagious disease or other causes, but even this excuse would not be valid unless he were sure that the patient to whom he is called is properly prepared for death. Needless to say, a good shepherd will risk his life for his sheep, especially if there are no other priests available. Priests who are not pastors are bound to administer this Sacrament under pain of mortal sin only *ex caritate* in case of extreme necessity.[14a]

A special duty incumbent upon pastors is to administer Extreme Unction in time, *i. e.*, before the patient has lost consciousness and all reasonable hope for his recovery has vanished. This obligation is shared by relatives, physicians, and

est enim simul et mortuorum sacramentum, et peccata mortalia remittere cum attritione potest."

14 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 1, 14.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Extr. Unct.*, Prooem.

14a *Codex Iuris Can.*, c. 938 sq.

nurses, who should see to it that the priest is called before it is too late. To leave a Catholic die without the Sacrament of Extreme Unction is often a mortal sin.[15] The duty of calling the priest and administering Extreme Unction arises also when the patient, after having at least partially recovered his health, again falls dangerously ill.[16]

Extreme Unction should be administered whenever there is actual danger of death. Here, if anywhere, the principle applies: *"In extremis extrema sunt tentanda."* However, care must be taken not to administer the Sacrament prematurely, because it can be received but once (*semel tantum*) in the course of the same illness, *i. e.*, the same danger of death.

The anointments must be given according to the Ritual. In urgent necessity one anointment (on the forehead), with the abbreviated formula, is sufficient, though if the patient live long enough, the omitted anointments must be supplied.[17] The anointment of the loins is now always omitted.[18] The anointment of the feet may be omitted for any reasonable cause.[19]

Holy Communion, which should be given to the sick

15 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 9: "*. . . gravissime peccant, qui illud tempus aegroti ungendi observare solent, quum iam omni salutis spe amissâ, vita et sensibus carere incipiat; constat enim, ad uberiorem sacramenti gratiam percipiendam plurimum valere, si aegrotus, quum in eo adhuc integra mens et ratio viget, fidemque et religiosam animi voluntatem afferre potest, sacro oleo liniatur.*"

16 Cfr. John XI, 3; *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, *De Extr. Unct.*, c. 3.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 6, qu. 9, 11.—*Rit. Rom.*, tit. 5, c. 1, n. 14: "*In eadem infirmitate hoc sacramentum iterari non debet, nisi diuturna sit; ut si, quum infirmus convaluerit, iterum in periculum mortis incidat.*"—Cfr. J. Kern, S.J., *De Sacr. Extr. Unctionis*, pp. 331 sqq.

17 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 947, § 1.

18 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 947, § 2.

19 *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 947, § 3.

frequently, should be administered as viaticum (*per modum viatici*) when it seems reasonably certain that the patient will not be able to receive it again.[20]

READINGS.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Compendium of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 233 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* pp. 766 sqq.—F. P. Kenrick, *Theologia Moralis,* Vol. II, pp. 261 sqq.—J. Kern, S.J., *De Sacramento Extremae Unctionis,* Ratisbon 1907.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. IV, pp. 1 sqq.—P. J. Hanley, *Treatise on the Sacrament of Extreme Unction,* New York 1907.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. III, 11th ed., Innsbruck 1914, pp. 521 sqq.—M. J. O'Donnell, "Extreme Unction in the New Code," in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record,* No. 604 (April 1918), pp. 286–297.—Stan. Woywod, O.F.M., in the *Ecclesiastical Review,* Vol. LIX, No. 2 (Aug. 1918), pp. 155 sqq.

20 *Rit. Rom.,* tit. 4, c. 4, n. 16–17.

SECTION 7

HOLY ORDERS

The Sacrament of Holy Orders (*sacramentum ordinis*) confers special graces as well as rights and prerogatives. It likewise imposes certain vocational duties and assigns to the recipient a permanent place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy (*ordo*). By means of this Sacrament the Catholic Church preserves and propagates the priesthood, to which are entrusted the ordinary preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.[1] From the nature of this Sacrament flow the following duties for clerics in particular and the faithful in general.

I. Duties of Those Who Are Ordained.—The candidate for Holy Orders must first of all have a true vocation for the clerical state. "They are said to be called by God," says the Roman Catechism, "who are called by the lawful ministers of the Church"[2] (external vocation).

1 Matt. XXVIII, 18 sqq.; John XX, 21 sqq.; 1 Cor. IV, 1 sq.

2 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 7, qu. 3: "*Vocari . . . a Deo dicuntur, qui a legitimis Ecclesiae ministris vocantur.*" Cfr. Heb. V, 5; J. Coppin, *La Vocation*, Roulers-Bruxelles 1903, pp. 427 sqq.

The candidate must, secondly, be actuated by pure motives in choosing the clerical state; that is to say, he must desire to promote the glory of God and coöperate in the salvation of souls, to the exclusion of all worldly motives, such as ambition, greed, a desire to rule, etc. Only of those who embrace the ecclesiastical state at the call of God and for the purpose of serving Him can it be truly said that they "enter the Church by the door." "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way [for the sake of gain or advancement], the same is a thief and a robber," and commits a sacrilege.[8]

The candidate for Holy Orders must, third, be properly prepared for the dignity and holiness of the priesthood. The required preparation is twofold, intellectual and moral. The intellectual preparation as a rule is provided by the seminary, and consists in acquiring the knowledge and mental attainments necessary for the performance of clerical duties. The moral preparation is partly mediate and partly immediate. The mediate preparation for the priesthood consists in acquiring the virtues necessary for its fruitful exercise by prayer, obedience, purity, mortification, etc. The immediate preparation consists in the performance of certain prescribed

8 John VIII, 49 sq.; X, 10; XVII, 4; Eph. IV, 11 sqq.; 2 Tim. II, 10; 1 Pet. V, 1 sqq.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 7, qu. 4.

exercises,—a spiritual retreat, receiving the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, etc.[4] Moral and mental fitness, as well as an ardent love for the ecclesiastical state constitute what may be styled internal vocation.

It goes without saying that the canonical conditions prescribed for the reception of major Orders must be conscientiously complied with.[5]

2. DUTIES OF THE FAITHFUL WITH REGARD TO THIS SACRAMENT.—Every Catholic is personally interested in a worthy and competent priesthood, and hence all are in duty bound to coöperate with the Church in providing this necessary instrument for the salvation of souls. The laity can do this, first, by following Christ's advice to ask God to send competent laborers into His vineyard.[6] Prayers to this effect should be said especially on ember days. Second, by contributing to the erection and support of seminaries, by aiding poor students, by inducing their sons to enter the service of the Church, or at least not preventing them from entering that service when they show signs of a true vocation. Third, by upholding the dignity of the priesthood, respecting their pastors,[7] protecting them against insult, providing for their wants,—in fine, by honoring

4 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 36, art. 1-2.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 7, qu. 26 sq.

5 Jos. Laurentius, S.J., *Inst. Iuris Eccles.*, 2nd ed., pp. 47 sqq.

6 Matt. IX, 36-38.

7 Ecclus. VII, 31 sqq.; Gal. IV, 14 sqq.; 1 Thess. V, 12-13; 1 Tim. V, 17.—*S. Greg. VII. Registr.*, l. VIII,

and supporting the priesthood in spite of the physical and moral defects of its representatives.

"None but those who love scandal," says Bishop Linsenmann, "will contribute to the fall of a weak priest and then abandon him to his fate. By honoring its priests a congregation not only gives proof of its high character, but lends them moral support, and in return receives moral support from them."[8] To the unfaithful or renegade priest, on the other hand, may be applied the French proverb: "Men profit by treason, but despise the traitor."[9] Don Bosco advises Catholics to be silent rather than speak ill of a priest. St. Vincent de Paul says: "Consider the matter as we will, brethren, we can contribute to no higher cause than the training of a worthy priesthood."[10]

The duties of those who have received Holy Orders are treated in "Special Morals."[11]

READINGS.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. IV, pp. 52 sqq. —Th. Slater, S.J., *A Compendium of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 241 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. III, 11th ed., pp. 541 sqq.—S. Woywod, O.F.M., in the *Eccles. Review,* Vol. LIX, No. 2, pp. 157 sqq.

epist. 21: *"Si carnales patres et matres honorare iubemur, quanto magis spirituales?"* (Migne, *P. L.*, CXLVIII, 601).

8 Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie,* p. 240.

9 *"On profite de la trahison, et l'on déte·te le traitre."*

10 Cfr. J. Gretser, S. J., *Mæcenas Studiosorum Pauperum,* Augsburg 1620.

11 See *Exposition of Christian Doctrine by a Seminary Professor,* Vol. III.—J. Kinane, "Clerical Obligations" (under the new Code of Canon Law), in the *Irish Eccles. Record,* Fifth Series, Vol. XI, No. 606, pp. 468 sqq.

SECTION 8

MATRIMONY

Marriage was instituted by God for the propagation of the human race.[1] Christ raised the contract to the dignity of a Sacrament.[2]

The Sacrament of Matrimony is a most important institution both from the moral and the social point of view. The duties it imposes may be briefly described as follows:

1. OBLIGATION.—No individual human being, whether man or woman, is obliged to enter the married state. The words of the Creator, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth," are to be regarded as a blessing;[3] but even if they embodied a formal command, they would bind only the race as a whole, not each individual member, for the object of the command, *i. e.*, the propagation of humankind, can be attained even though many

1 Gen. I, 27 sq.; II, 18–24.—St. Augustine, *Contra Iulian. Pelag.*, III, c. 25, n. 57; *ibid.*, IV, c. 7, n. 38 (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 731, 757).

2 Matt. XIX, 4–6; Eph. V, 21–32.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXIV, *De Matr.*, can. 1.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 8, qu. 14–16.

3 Gen. I, 26; cfr. Gen. V, 2; VIII, 17; IX, 1, 7; XVII, 20 sq.; XXVIII, 3; XXXV, 11; XLVIII, 3 sq.—St. Augustine, *De Peccato Orig.*, c. 35, n. 40: *"Illa Dei verba: Crescite et multiplicamini, non est damnandorum praedictio peccatorum, sed fecundatarum benedictio nuptiarum."* (Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, 405).

remain unmarried.[4] The New Testament distinctly teaches that marriage is not an obligation binding all, but that, on the contrary, virginity is a higher good (*bonum melius*) because it enables man to devote himself wholly to the service of God. To lead a single life for religious or moral motives is better than to marry.[5]

Besides voluntary virginity, just described, there is another kind, altogether involuntary or compulsory, due to physical, moral or social causes. The conditions of life in which a man is placed may be such as to preclude marriage. Thus he may be unable to find a mate, or he may be physically unfit, or suffer from defects or inclinations which make a happy marriage impossible or, at any rate, extremely doubtful. It is no sin to remain unmarried for such and similar reasons. But to refuse to assume the duties of the married state out of pure selfishness, *e. g.*, be-

4 *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 8, qu. 12.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 152, art. 2, ad 1: *"Praeceptum datum de generatione (Gen. I, 28) respicit totam multitudinem hominum, cui necessarium est, non solum, quod multiplicetur corporaliter, sed etiam, quod spiritualiter proficiat. Et ideo sufficienter providetur humanae multitudini, si quidam carnali generationi operam dent, quidam vero ab hac abstinentes, contemplationi divinorum vacent ad totius humani generis pulchritudinem et salutem: sicut etiam in exercitu quidam castra custodiunt, quidam signa deferunt, quidam gladiis decertant, quae tamen omnia debita sunt multitudini, sed per unum impleri non possunt."*—*Ibid.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 41, art. 1 sq.—H. Denifle, O.P., *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 268 sqq. (Volz's translation, I, 1, Somerset, O., 1917, pp. 261 sqq.).

5 Matt. XIX, 10 sqq.; 1 Cor. VII, 25 sq., 32 sqq.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXIV, can. 10: *"Si quis dixerit, statum coniugalem anteponendum esse statui virginitatis vel caelibatus, et non esse melius ac beatius manere in virginitate aut caelibatu, quam iungi matrimonio, anathema sit."*

cause of an inordinate love of pleasure, or in order to be able to continue in vicious habits,[6] is contrary to the moral law and exposes a man to great danger.

However, we must be slow to condemn unmarried persons, for they may be actuated by perfectly legitimate motives which they do not care and are under no obligation to reveal even to their confessor.

One who is too weak to lead a chaste life and unwilling to employ the moral and religious means which would enable him to live continently,[7] is in duty bound to marry, and the confessor should tell him so.[8] However, it is necessary to proceed with caution in such cases, because the question of marriage is a most delicate and important one, and continence has to be practiced at certain times even in wedlock. St. Paul expressly teaches that no one should be forbidden to marry, and in spite of his high regard for widows, frankly admits that for many of them it would be better to marry again.[9]

6 *"Non amator coniugii, sed libidinis servus."* Cfr. St. Augustine, *Confessiones,* l. VI, c. 15, n. 25 (Migne, *P. L.,* XXXII, 732); C. Krieg, *Wissenschaft der Seelenleitung,* Vol. I, pp. 318 sqq.

7 Mark XIV, 38; 1 Cor. X, 13.—*Conc. Trident.,* Sess. XXIV, can. 9 *"Si quis dixerit, . . . posse omnes contrahere matrimonium, qui non sentiunt se castitatis, etiamsi eam voverint, habere donum, anathema sit, quum Deus id recte petentibus non deneget nec patiatur, nos supra id, quod possumus, tentari."*—Sess. VI, cap. 11: *"Deus impossibilia non iubet."*—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.,* CXXXI, n. 3: *"Nemo praesumat viribus suis se reddere, quod voverit; qui te hortatur, ut voveas, ipse adiuvat ut reddas."* (Migne, *P. L.,* XXXVII, 1717).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* 3a, Suppl., qu. 42, art. 3, ad 3: *"Adhibetur maius remedium [contra concupiscentiae morbum] per opera spiritualia et carnis mortificationem ab illis, qui matrimonio non utuntur."*

8 1 Cor. VII, 9: κρεῖσσον γάρ ἐστιν γαμῆσαι ἢ πυροῦσθαι.—On the meaning of *uri* and of the vow of celibacy see Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum,* Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 92 sqq. (English translation by Volz, I, 1, pp. 100 sqq.).

9 1 Cor. VII, 1 sq., 8 sq., 39 sq.; 1 Tim. IV, 3; V, 5, 14 sq.

2. Duties with Regard to the Reception of the Sacrament.—These are partly negative and partly positive.

a) Motives.—The motives by which a person is led to embrace the married state must be morally licit.

α) Both parties must be convinced that they are called to the married state and that they possess not only the necessary knowledge but likewise the religious and ethical qualities without which married life cannot prove pleasing to God nor helpful to the contracting parties.[10] As the sexes are drawn together indiscriminately by the natural stimulus of sensual and intellectual attraction, the gratification of the sexual instinct[11] is not a sufficient moral motive to justify marriage. The same is true of greed, Platonic love, so called, and other purely secular motives. None of these suffices to constitute matrimony a truly moral relationship.

There is nothing wrong in attending to physical beauty and natural attraction in selecting a part-

10 Ecclus. VII, 27 sq.; 1 Tim. II, 15.—*Rit. Rom.*, tit. 7, c. 1, n. 1: "*Uterque sciat rudimenta fidei, quum ea deinde filios suos docere debeant.*"—For the instruction of bridal couples in the duties of their new state of life there are available a number of useful books, *e. g.*, Gerard, *Marriage and Parenthood* (New York: Jos. Wagner), and others.

11 The Roman Catechism (P. II, c. 8, qu. 8) admonishes parish priests to teach the faithful that the nature and import of marriage consist in the bond and obligation, and that, besides the consent expressed in the manner prescribed by the Church, consummation is not necessarily required to constitute a true marriage. —Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. IV, 2nd ed., pp. 184 sqq.

ner for life, but this motive should not be made a primary one.[12] Of considerably more importance than natural charms is the possession of material means assuring an income and a satisfactory social position which offers solid guarantees for the adequate support of a family. It is also perfectly legitimate to take into consideration the reasonable wishes of parents and relatives. Though the validity of marriage does not depend upon the consent of the parents (*consensus parentum*) of either party, both are in duty bound to pay due regard to the rights and interests of their respective families. A marriage contracted against the will or without the blessing of parents whose demands are reasonable, lacks one of the moral foundations of wedlock and one of the principal guarantees of marital happiness.[13] Commendable moral motives are: a de-

12 Cfr. Gen. XXIV, 16; XXIX, 17.—Tertullian, *De Cultu Fem.*, l. II, c. 2: "*Accusandus decor non est, ut felicitas corporis, ut divinae plasticae accessio, ut animae aliqua vestis urbana.*" (Ed. Leopold, P. II, 87).—St. Ambrose, *De Offic.*, I, n. 83: "*Nos certe in pulchritudine corporis locum virtutis non ponimus, gratiam tamen non excludimus, quia verecundia et vultus ipsos solet pudore obfundere gratioresque reddere. Ut enim artifex in materia commodiore melius operari solet, sic verecundia in ipso quoque corporis decore plus eminet.*"—Idem, *De Inst. Virg.*, n. 30: "*Cur tu vultus decorem in coniuge magis quam morum requiris? Placet uxor honestate magis quam pulchritudine. . . . Non possumus reprehendere divini artificis opus, sed quem delectat corporis pulchritudo, multo magis illa delectet venustas, quae ad imaginem Dei est intus, non foris comptior.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XVI, 48, 312).—Idem, *De Abraham*, l. I, n. 6: "*Non tam pulchritudo mulieris, quam virtus eius et gravitas delectat virum.*" (*P. L.*, XIV, 423).

13 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXIV, *De Reform. Matr.*, c. 1; *Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 8, qu. 26; Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, n. 569 sqq.; Kenrick, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 289 sq.

sire for mutual happiness and sanctification, the wish to rear a family according to God's holy will, etc.

Broadly speaking, it is better to marry young than to wait too long. Most of those who are called to the married state will find it to their advantage to marry at an age when they are still pliable and enjoy their full physical powers. If a man postpones marriage too long he is apt to lose courage and become unfit for married life. Husband and wife grow accustomed to each other more easily if both are young and tractable and inspired by high ideals. Needless to add, no man should marry until he is able to support a family.

Persons who are physically underdeveloped or suffer from some hereditary disease or other serious bodily ailment, should not marry. The normal development and good health of the female is of special importance. Marital happiness largely depends on the health of the wife. No girl ought to think of marriage before she is twenty. The husband should be several years older than the wife, and able to exercise self-control. A great deal of misery is caused by people marrying too young.

The Church discourages, and to a certain extent forbids, marriage among blood relations, because such unions frequently result in stunted and defective children. The Mosaic law forbade them as harmful for the offspring of the contracting parties as well as for the nation at large.[14]

To prevent grievous disappointments, which are all too apt to endanger conjugal happiness, the contracting parties should be frank with each other in regard to their pecuniary means and all other temporal matters of importance.

14 Lev. XX, 17.

β) The Church earnestly warns her children against *mixed marriages.* Except for the gravest of reasons no sensible Catholic will marry a person belonging to another religion. The nature and purpose of marriage demand true piety and virtue in both parties, in order that they may assist and sanctify each other.[15] The Catholic, therefore, who knowingly and willingly marries a person having no religious or moral convictions, or a false religion, commits a sin and is guilty of an immoral act. There can be no true unity of mind and heart, no harmony between husband and wife, least of all in the upbringing of children, if they differ in this most essential matter of religious belief. But the Church's opposition to mixed marriages rests on a more important consideration even than that. She regards the Sacrament of Matrimony as a symbol of Christ's union with His Church [16] and a nursery of souls. Hence she is perfectly justified in disapproving of mixed marriages and permitting them only with reluctance and under certain well defined conditions.[17]

b) PREPARATION.—As the reception of this

15 Cfr. 1 Thess. IV, 3–7; 1 Tim. II, 15; 1 Pet. III, 1–7.

16 Eph. V, 22–23; cfr. 1 Cor. VII, 39; Col. III, 18.—P. Schanz, *Die Lehre von den hl. Sakramenten*, pp. 713 sqq.

17 Cfr. A. A. Lambing, *Mixed Marriages, Their Origin and Results*, Notre Dame, Ind., 4th ed., 1917; G. Schlachter, C.PP.S., *Mixed Marriages*, Collegeville, Ind., 1915; W. Fanning, S.J., in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. IX, pp. 698 sq.; A. Devine, C.P., *The Law of Christian Marriage*, New York, 1909.

Sacrament is a most important step, fraught with grave and lasting consequences, the contracting parties should prepare themselves carefully by cleansing their souls and rekindling their religious ardor. It is the fervent desire of the Church, and in full conformity with her practice, that both bride and groom go to confession and receive Holy Communion immediately, or at least within three days, before marriage.[18] To receive this Sacrament in the state of mortal sin is in itself a mortal sin and a sacrilege. Making a general confession may be advisable, but is not, generally speaking, of obligation. The nupturients should abstain from undue intimacy before marriage and when the time has come to plight their troth, they should do so in the presence of the required witnesses. To be canonically valid a promise of marriage must be made in writing and signed by the nupturients, their pastor or bishop, or at least two witnesses.

Persons engaged to be married should not live together under the same roof.[19] Another thing to be discouraged is too protracted "company-keeping," which, as experi-

18 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXIV, *De Ref. Martr.*, c. 1: *"Sancta synodus coniuges hortatur, ut, antequam contrahant, vel saltem triduo ante matrimonii consummationem sua peccata diligenter confiteantur et ad sanctissimum Eucharistiae sacramentum pie accedant."*

19 *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXIV, *De Ref. Matr.*, cap. 1.—*Rit. Rom.*, tit. 7, c. 1, n. 14: *"Moneat parochus coniuges, ut ante benedictionem sacerdotalem in templo suscipiendam in eadem domo non cohabitent, neque matrimonium consumment, nec etiam simul maneant, nisi aliquibus propinquis vel aliis praesentibus."*

ence teaches, is rarely compatible with chastity. Parents have a duty in this regard which they must not neglect. They should keep a watchful eye on their children even after they are "engaged." The young people themselves should remember that undue liberties taken before marriage, besides being sinful and highly displeasing to God, are apt to undermine that mutual respect which is so necessary an element of happiness in married life, especially after sensuality has abated.

As marriage is valid only when contracted in conformity with the rules of the Church, nupturients should scrupulously obey the precepts of Canon Law. Above all they should not attempt to get married if there is a diriment impediment between them. To do so would be a mortal sin and the marriage itself invalid. If two persons have married without being aware of the existence of a diriment impediment, they must stop conjugal intercourse as soon as they learn of the fact and have the marriage bond "healed," or else part forever.

To neglect to ask for a dispensation where there is a forbidding impediment, is also mortally sinful. Nobody is obliged to reveal the existence of a marital impediment if the revelation involves injury to his own good name or that of another,[20] and those who wish to get married should be instructed that dispensations for secret impediments need not be requested through their respective pastors, but may be obtained through any confessor.[21]

Holy Scripture nowhere says that it is necessary to have an ecclesiastical ceremony in connection with mar-

20 Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. VI, n. 995.

21 Dr. Koch relegates the entire subject of marriage impediments to Canon Law, to which it properly belongs. For utility's sake we add the essentials in an appendix (pp. 215 sqq.) in the preparation of which we have had the valued assistance of two eminent canonists and a professor of moral theology.

riage, but St. Paul's declaration that marriages are contracted "in the Lord" and "sanctified by the word of God and prayer,"[21] naturally led the early Christians to ask the Church for her blessing when they were about to enter this holy state. That Matrimony between Catholics should not be contracted without the approbation and co-operation of the Church follows from its nature as a Sacrament. While civil marriage is *per se* neither immoral nor irreligious, yet as a consequence of the unnatural rupture between State and Church it necessarily involves disrespect to the latter and is sinful.[22] That marriage should take place *in facie Ecclesiae* is a demand practically as ancient as the Church herself, though the Fathers regarded the blessing of bishop or priest merely as a condition of licitness, not of validity.[23]

No matter what laws the State may make with regard to marriage, the rules of the Church never cease to bind the faithful and cannot therefore be disregarded without sin. Catholics who wish to contract marriage are in duty bound, after observing the formalities required by the State, to declare their mutual consent *in facie Ecclesiae*, *i. e.*, ordinarily, before their pastor and two witnesses, and they should be reminded that it is only by virtue of this act that they really become man and wife, fully entitled to the privileges of the married state.

To seek a husband or a wife by advertising in the newspapers is sometimes justified by circumstances and therefore morally licit.

21 1 Cor. VII, 39; 1 Tim. IV, 5; cfr. 1 Cor. X, 31; Col. III, 17; 1 Pet. IV, 11.

22 Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. IV, pp. 240 sq.

23 St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epist. ad Polyc.*, c. 5: "It is right for men and women who marry to be united with the consent of the Bishop, that the marriage be according to the Lord, and not according to lust. Let all things be done to the honor of God." (Funk, *Patr. Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., 292, 6; Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, London 1912, p. 272).

The wedding celebration should be kept within the bounds of decency and good order, so that Christ and His blessed Mother could attend without offence, as they did at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. Here, too, St. Paul's admonition should be heeded: "Rejoice in the Lord always!" [24]

Wedding feasts should not be celebrated on Saturday, because if the celebration extends far into the night, as often happens, there is danger that the participants may miss Mass on the Sunday following.

Readings.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Compendium of Moral Theology,* Vol. II, pp. 268 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. IV, pp. 140 sqq.—F. P. Kendrick, *Theologia Moralis,* Vol. II, pp. 279 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. III, pp. 572 sqq.—M. A. Gearin, C.SS.R., "The Matrimonial Law According to the New Code," in the *Ecclesiastical Review,* Vol. LVIII, No. 5 (May 1918), pp. 473–495.

24 Phil. IV, 4.—*Conc. Trident.,* Sess. XXIV, *De Ref. Matr.,* c. 10.—*Rit. Rom.,* tit. 7, c. 1, n. 18: "*Matrimonium omni tempore contrahi potest. Nuptiae vero quâ decet modestia et honestate fiant; sancta enim res est matrimonium sancteque tractandum.*"

CHAPTER III

THE SACRAMENTALS

1. Whereas the object of the Sacraments is to bring the more important events of human life into relation with the grace of God, and thereby to sanctify them, the Sacramentals [1] were instituted for the purpose of placing the whole of life under the special protection of Providence, either by warding off the influence of the devil and his cohorts, or by calling down the blessing of God upon certain persons and things and dedicating them to His service and the pious use of the faithful.[2]

2. The Catholic, who is expected to employ all things for the honor of God,[3] has a special duty in connection with the Sacramentals, namely, to respect and use them with faith and confidence and with a contrite and humble heart for the salvation of his soul as well as to obtain temporal blessings.

1 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 29, art. 1: *"Est haec differentia, quo sacramentum dicitur illa actio Ecclesiae, quae attingit ad effectum principaliter intentum in administratione sacramentorum; sed sacramentale dicitur illa actio, quae, quamvis non pertingat ad illum effectum, tamen ordinatur aliquo modo ad illam actionem principalem."*

2 Matt. XX, 1; Mark XVI, 17 sq.; 1 Tim. IV, 4 sq.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 65, art. 1, ad 3 and 6.

3 1 Cor. X, 31.

The number of the Sacramentals may not be limited. The most popular are: the sign of the cross, pronouncing the holy name of Jesus, the use of Holy Water,[4] and various blessings of objects commonly employed by man, *e. g.*, the house in which he lives, the field he tills, the fruits he raises, etc. Needless to say, these objects, when blessed by the Church, should be used with due respect but without superstition.

"It would be quite natural to apprehend that the blessing of ordinary objects should lead to a profanation and degradation of sacred things. However, this is not the case. These objects are in reality destined for a higher service and a superior form of existence than that which they now have, and the blessing pronounced upon them by the Church is but an anticipation of that supernatural form of being which was typified in Paradise immediately after the Creation. That the use of the Sacramentals sometimes gives rise to profanation or superstition does not diminish their religious and moral importance."[5]

4 Cfr. Tertullian, *De Corona*, c. 3: "*Ad omnem progressum atque promotum, ad omnem aditum et exitum, ad vestitum et calceatum, ad lavacra, ad mensas, ad lumina, ad cubilia, ad sedilia, quaecunque nos conversatio exercet, frontem crucis signaculo terimus.*" (Ed. Leopold, P. I, 188).—St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 22, n. 37: "*Ad omnem actum, ad omnem incessum manus pingat Domini crucem.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXII, 421).—St. Augustine, *De Cat. Rud.*, c. 20, n. 34: "[*Christi*] *passionis et crucis signo in fronte hodie tamquam in poste signandus es, omnesque christiani signantur.*" (*P. L.*, XL, 335).—A. Gastoué, *L'Eau Bénite*, Paris 1907.

5 F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 248.

READINGS.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments,* Vol. I, 2nd ed., St. Louis 1917, pp. 111 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae,* Vol. VI, 3rd ed., pp. 141 sqq.—G. Arendt, S.J., *De Sacramentalibus Disquisitio,* 2nd ed., Rome 1900.—A. A. Lambing, *The Sacramentals of the Holy Catholic Church,* New York 1892.—F. Probst, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen,* Tübingen 1857.—H. Leclercq, O.S.B., art. "Sacramentals," in the *Cath. Encyclopedia,* Vol. XIII.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Compendium Theologiae Moralis,* pp. 531 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis,* Vol. III, pp. 49 sqq.

APPENDIX

THE MARRIAGE IMPEDIMENTS UNDER THE NEW CODE OF CANON LAW

According to the laws of most of our States, marriage is nothing but a legal contract. As such the State prescribes for it the conditions under which it shall be valid or invalid. In many States marriages between close relatives, or marriages between white people and negroes, are null and void. In other words the States set up impediments to the marriage contract.

The Catholic Church also recognizes in marriage a contract, but a contract elevated to the dignity of a Sacrament; and because marriage is a Sacrament, the Church alone, under whose jurisdiction Christ placed all the Sacraments, has the power to make rules and regulations with regard to this sacred contract, and to set up impediments which render it unlawful or invalid also as a Sacrament.

Some of these impediments, however, have been changed or modified in the course of centuries, as the needs of the time demanded. Especially is this the case in the new Code of Church laws promulgated by our Holy Father Benedict XV, in 1917, and of binding force since Whitsunday, 1918. In Canons 1036–1058, which form Chapter II of the section on the Sacrament of Matrimony, "Of the Impediments of Matrimony in General," these impediments are laid down with great clearness.

First of all they are divided into (1) forbidding, (2) nullifying, (3) public, (4) occult, (5) impediments of minor and (6) of major grade. The four last divisions are made principally to facilitate dispensations, and this treatise will not suffer if we disregard them entirely. But we must say a few words about the forbidding and nullifying impediments as modified by the new Code.

I. Forbidding Impediments.—Forbidding impediments (*impedimenta impedientia*) are those which interdict a marriage under pain of mortal sin, yet do not render it invalid if it is contracted in spite of the prohibition. The state of mortal sin or excommunication prohibits marriage, though this is usually not counted as a forbidding impediment. The forbidding impediments in the strict sense are:

1. The *prohibition of the Church, viz.,* if the Pope for the whole Church, or the bishop for his diocese interdicts an intended marriage for grave reasons. Such reasons would be, for instance:

(a) Grave suspicion that impediments exist to the proposed marriage;

(b) Fear that the marriage will cause great trouble;

(c) Refusal of parents to give their consent to the marriage of their children, etc.

The Church also forbids (*α*) Marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic; and (*β*) Marrying without the publication of the banns.

2. *Solemn marriages* are forbidden from the first Sunday of Advent, inclusive, till the day after Christmas, exclusive, and from Ash Wednesday, inclusive, till the Monday after Easter, exclusive. During this time marriages may take place, but without the solemn blessing of the bride or any worldly celebration.

3. A simple *vow* of virginity, of perfect chastity, of

not marrying, of receiving sacred orders, or of embracing the religious state, also hinders marriage (can. 1058, § 1), and a man (or woman) who would marry while bound by such a vow would commit a mortal sin, unless he had the firm will to keep his vow in the married state,— which would, however, be deceiving the other party, or unless both parties consent to respect the vow during the marriage,— which can hardly be allowed to them on account of human frailty.

4. Another and a new prohibitive impediment set up by the Code (canon 1059) is *legal relationship arising from adoption* in countries in which the civil law renders such marriages unlawful. Accordingly, a boy who is legally adopted by a family cannot marry the daughter of the couple who adopted him in places where the civil law forbids it.

5. The main prohibitive impediment under the new Code is that called *mixed religion*. It interdicts marriage between Catholics and baptized heretics or schismatics. Canon 1060 " most severely " forbids such marriages, and adds that " if there is danger that the Catholic party, or a child born of the union, may lose the faith, the marriage is forbidden also by divine law."

Canon 1061 states the conditions under which the Church grants a dispensation for a mixed marriage, *viz.:* (a) For just and grave reasons; (b) Upon a written guarantee that the non-Catholic party will not interfere with the religion of the Catholic spouse, and that all children born to them will be baptized and brought up in the Catholic faith; (c) Upon the morally certain assurance that these conditions will be fulfilled.

Canon 1062 adds that " the Catholic party is obliged prudently to try to convert the non-Catholic party."

Canon 1063 warns the parties to such a mixed mar-

riage not to attempt, either before or after the ceremony in the Catholic Church, to have the marriage blessed by a Protestant minister.

Canon 1065 (§ 1) exhorts the faithful not to marry persons who have publicly given up the faith, or joined a condemned society, and (§ 2) forbids pastors to assist at such marriages without grave reasons and the permission of the bishop. Lastly, canon 1066 commands pastors not to assist at the marriage of public sinners if they refuse to go to Confession, unless for a grave cause, concerning which they should, if possible, consult the Ordinary.

Apart from the dispensation, other circumstances may exist which may render the marriage decidedly inadvisable, or, it may be, even sinful.

II. Nullifying or Diriment Impediments.— As the word itself implies, diriment impediments (*impedimenta dirimentia*) are such as not merely forbid a marriage but render it invalid. There are sixteen such diriment or nullifying impediments.

1. A *substantial error* with regard to a marriage is usually quoted by moralists as the first diriment impediment. It would exist, for instance, if a man, instead of marrying the woman of his choice, would by mistake marry another; or if he were to make an explicit condition (*i. e., conditio sine qua non*) to marry only a rich person, or one of noble birth or well educated, whereas the one actually married proved to be the contrary. If such a condition is not expressly mentioned, however, or if the error concerns only accidental qualities, the marriage is valid. Note that it is not allowed, under pain of mortal sin, to marry with any condition like those mentioned. For marriage, which God wants

to be indissoluble, is not to be rendered soluble for frivolous reasons.

2. *Slavery* is given in Moral Theology as the second diriment impediment. It makes a marriage between a slave and a free person, who is ignorant of the condition of the other party, impossible. Whilst an error about the qualities or conditions of a person does not nullify a marriage, as stated above, the Church has wisely made an exception in setting up this impediment, because a slave is subject entirely and in all things to the will of his master, which is adverse to the marriage rights of a free man. Now-a-days slavery is practically abolished nearly everywhere, and hence this impediment hardly counts.

3. *Grave fear,* through which a person is unjustly forced to marry, is another impediment which nullifies marriage. Marriage is of such importance that it requires full liberty of action.

4. A person must also be of proper *age* in order to be able to contract a valid marriage. The age limit has been changed by Canon 1067 of the new Code, according to which (§ 1) males cannot validly marry before they have completed their sixteenth and females their fourteenth year. The same canon (§ 2) exhorts pastors to deter young people from getting married until they have reached the age usual in their country.

5. Another diriment impediment is mentioned in Canon 1068, *viz., impotence,* if it precedes marriage and is permanent, whether it be known to the other party or not, or whether it renders the other unable to cohabit properly with anybody or only with the intended spouse. If there is any doubt about the existence of this impediment the marriage is not to be hindered. Neither does *sterility* prevent marriage according to the same Canon.

6. Canon 1069 insists on the natural law impediment called "*ligamen*" or bond of a previous marriage, which renders invalid any attempted marriage during the lifetime of a married couple, even if their marriage was never consummated. The only exception is the so-called "Pauline privilege." St. Paul allows the Catholic party to marry again if the non-baptized or non-Christian party refuses to live in peace with the former. "For," as the Apostle says, "a brother or sister is not under servitude in such cases."[1] The same Canon forbids a new marriage in case the former marriage was found invalid or had been annulled before legitimate authority (*i. e.,* the bishop or the Holy See) permitted the new marriage.

7. Marriage between persons baptized in, or converted to, the Catholic Church, on the one hand, and unbaptized persons on the other (*disparity of worship*), is declared invalid in Canon 1070. The law speaks of persons baptized in, or converted to, the Catholic Church, *i. e.,* of persons who ought to be Catholics. Therefore a baptized non-Catholic who never joined the Church can validly marry an unbaptized person. The same Canon also declares (§ 2) that if at the time of such a marriage a person was commonly held to have been baptized, or if the Baptism was of doubtful validity, the marriage should be upheld until it is proved that one party was, and the other was not, baptized.

8. *Attempted marriage of clerics* in higher orders, or of *religious* with solemn vows, or of religious with simple vows (which in this respect have the privileges of solemn vows) is declared invalid by canons 1072 and 1073.

9. No marriage can exist between a woman who was

[1] I Cor. VII, 15.

forcibly abducted and the man who *abducted* her for the purpose of marriage, even if the former went of her own free choice to the place where she is forcibly detained by the latter for the purpose of inducing her to marry him. But the impediment ceases as soon as the woman is set free and willingly consents to the marriage (canon 1074).

10. The impediment of *crime,* as described in canon 1075, contains three distinct impediments. The first is contracted if a man and a woman, while at least one of them is lawfully married, commit adultery with the mutual promise to marry each other, or if they attempt civil marriage. The second is contracted if a man and a woman, while at least one of them is lawfully married, commit adultery with each other and one of them kills his or her lawful spouse. The third impediment is contracted if a man and a woman coöperate physically or morally in bringing about the death of husband or wife, even though the crime of adultery was not committed.

11. The diriment impediment of *consanguinity* or blood-relationship extends, according to canon 1076, to all degrees in the direct line upward (father, grandfather, etc.), and downward (son, grandson, etc.). In the collateral (side) line it extends only to the third degree, inclusive. The same canon also forbids marriage when there is positive doubt whether the parties are related by blood in any degree of the direct line or in the first degree of the collateral line.

12. *Affinity* (relationship by marriage) constitutes a diriment impediment in all degrees of the direct line, and up to the second degree, inclusive, of the collateral line (canon 1077); which means that the marriage of a woman after the death of her husband with any of his blood relatives in the direct line, and to the second de-

gree of the collateral line, is invalid. Canon 97 declares that the impediment of affinity arises only from a valid marriage, whether consummated or not. The former impediment of affinity from sinful intercourse is dropped.

13. *Public decorum* is another diriment impediment (canon 1078). It may arise from an invalid marriage, whether consummated or not, or from public and notorious concubinage. The law forbids and annuls a marriage between such a man and the woman's blood relations in the first and second degree of the direct line, and *vice versa.*

14. Besides the diriment impediments of bodily relationship mentioned in the last three numbers, there is also a *spiritual relationship* (canons 1079, 768), which exists (a) between the one who baptizes and the person baptized, and (b) between the one baptized and his or her sponsor. This relationship is not contracted if Baptism is given conditionally, unless the same sponsor again acts in the ceremony of solemn Baptism (canon 763).

15. Another diriment impediment (canon 1080) is that of *legal relationship arising from adoption.* It constitutes a diriment impediment only where it is so regarded by the civil law. Thus if the civil law should declare the marriage of an adopted child with a natural child of the same family invalid, it would be invalid also in the eyes of the Church; not so, however, if the laws of the State in which the marriage takes place admit such marriages as valid.

16. The impediment of *clandestinity* is thus defined in canon 1094: "Only those marriages are valid which are contracted before the parish priest, or the Ordinary of the diocese, or a priest delegated by either of these, and at least two witnesses."

READINGS.— J. M. O'Hara, *The Laws of Marriage Simply Explained According to the New Code,* Philadelphia, 1918.— M. J. O'Donnell, "Matrimony in the New Code," in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record,* Fifth Series, Vol. XI (1918), Nos. 6 sqq.— S. Woywod, O.F.M., *The New Canon Law,* New York, 1918, pp. 209 sqq.

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